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THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF THE LATE

REV. PHILIP SKELTON,

RECTOR OF FINTONA, &c. &c.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

BURDY'S LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

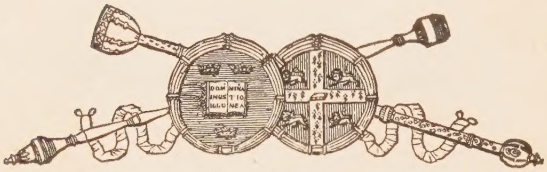
EDITED BY THE

REV. ROB$^{T.}$ LYNAM, A. M.

ASSISTANT CHAPLAIN TO THE MAGDALEN HOSPITAL.

IN SIX VOLUMES:

VOL. VI.



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AN

APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE

ON THE

SUBJECT OF CHRISTIANITY;

HYMNS;

AND

SENILIA,

OR,

AN OLD MAN'S MISCELLANY.

3164

AN

APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE

ON THE SUBJECT OF

CHRISTIANITY;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

SOME THOUGHTS ON COMMON SENSE

THUS APPEALED TO,

WHEREWITH THE PLAIN UNLEARNED READER WILL DO WELL NOT TO CONCERN HIMSELF, AS THEY MAY PROVE EQUALLY UNINTELLIGIBLE AND USELESS TO HIM.

"Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"—Luke xii. 57.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LADY ARBELLA DENNY.

MADAM,

YOUR extreme unwillingness to admit the address of my former volumes to your Ladyship should preclude this, were it not that the still greater necessity of a patronage for the present compels me to throw it at your feet without asking your permission. For my boldness in both instances I most humbly beg your Ladyship's pardon. Be not alarmed however. I am not going again to tell you and the world, who you are, nor what you have been always doing: particulars, your humility will with difficulty learn from the voice of this, and more kingdoms than this. No, madam, the purport of this address is rather prefatory than dedicatory. The acrimonious reader, &c. I fear, the judicious too, will find failures enough here to please the former, and disgust the latter. But the candid and good-natured, with your Ladyship, will pardon this, as written after the seventy-sixth year of the author's life. Yet even the most candid may say, why write at all so late in life? The prevalence of infidelity, and the almost deserted cause of truth and virtue, may possibly apologize for my standing forth once more, after having formerly published too much, and having resolved, from the year 1777, never to transgress in the same manner again. There are three pieces contained in this volume.*

The first, an Appeal to Common Sense on the Subject of Christianity, written, the author hopes, in so plain a style as to render it intelligible to the meanest capacity, and yet so supported by the word of God, and sound reason, as to justify itself, wherever common sense is not banished by philosophy from the minds of the more learned. Your Ladyship may possibly judge, some parts of this Appeal not inapplicable to the instruction and reformation of the Mag-

* In the present edition "Senilia" has been added to this volume.

dalens, about which you have been, all along, so exceedingly anxious; and the rather, as it includes a very short and plain Catechism, containing just all, and nothing more, than every Christian ought to know, and also five or six short questions of self-examination, to be answered only by the self-examiner.

The second part of this volume carries the title of Thoughts on Common Sense itself, and is a sort of essay or rhapsody, wherein the author attempts to settle (not hitherto sufficiently settled) the idea of the common sense at least, to which he had appealed. In this he is not careful to keep down the style, because the matter is above the comprehension of plain readers, and rather unfit, if they could understand it, for their perusal; for, in this among other matters, he endeavours by reason, and sometimes by ridicule, to expose the infinite absurdities, into which the most eminent philosophers, and some of the most considerable philosophical divines, have deviated from common sense, particularly when their philosophy presumes to interfere with religion, which it too often does in a degree and manner, almost as far from being tolerated by common sense, as by the Author of religion.

The third part consists of Hymns, the first and last, made up of religious contemplations, were defectively printed in one of the former volumes, but here corrected, and somewhat improved. These, however meanly performed, are intended to excite in such minds, as may happen not wholly to contemn them, a spirit of piety and devotion. The author, in his youth, was addicted to poetry, for which he was thought to have a little talent. But his sacred employment having confined him, for above fifty years, to prose, he hardly ever thought of versifying his then very sober conceptions. Hence it is, that, in his seventy-sixth year, he awkwardly returned to poetry. Herein, like Socrates, who, at an age, not less advanced, versified the fables of Æsop, he employed some part of his leisure, in a state of sequestration from business and the world, by thus dilating that poor remainder of warmth, which a sense of religion still kept alive in his aged heart, as your Ladyship will see with regret in these Hymns. When he compared them with the dignity of their subjects, and with the superior excellence of other men's perform-

ances on subjects, vastly inferior, he was really ashamed of them, and tried in vain to get others to improve them. Indifferent as they are, you, Madam, will perhaps sometimes observe the ruins, if not of a palace, yet of a decent cottage, which had once given shelter to the humility and piety of a peasant. You will also, he hopes, sometimes taste the juice of fruit, stunted like the tree it falls from, but more concentered, if not better concocted, than the larger productions, which shine among the leaves of a younger plant. Contrary to the practice of supercilious critics, the better stanzas will apologize for the worse with your Ladyship's candour, especially if you happen to recollect an observation of Dryden, that in a building, howsoever magnificent, brickbats, pinnings, &c. though but of poor appearance, must often find a place. If, having little better than these to build with, the author should here and there make somewhat of them above mediocrity, you will look at it, in passing, just as you do at some tolerable cabin on the rock.

So much for his poetical, and as to his moral and religious confessions, he therein levels all mankind, himself among the rest, with the Magdalens, being of opinion with our church, that penitentials should lead the way in all our devotions, he can no more admit a possibility of too high expression for any other congregation, in regard to our sense of sin, than for that in the gallery of your asylum. If the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, and if no less in our beds, than at the gallows, we all die as criminals, there can be no room left for pride, and self-preference, especially in our confessions, to lean on comparisons or extenuations.

Unfortunately for me, and my poor Hymns, all attempts of the kind have been lately condemned by some of our ablest critics, on this maxim, that human genius must for ever sink under the dignity of the subjects. This is so true, that I seize it as an excuse for the impotence of my attempt, while I bow to it as a sentence of condemnation. But the critics, one of them at least, will be concerned when they consider, how much too far the censure goes; for, if it is admitted, it equally condemns, not only the utmost efforts of human genius, but all the psalms dictated by Divine inspiration, and even the hosannas and hallelujahs of heaven, inasmuch as the subjects, God, his wisdom, his power, his

mercy, are infinitely above all created abilities of celebration. If I am not able to bring an ox to the altar of God, may I not bring my young pigeon? Yes, you say, provided it is unblemished; and I answer, my High Priest will not judge my offering according to the rigour of the law, if he sees my poverty can afford no better; neither will God expect perfection in the works of men. In all sacrifices and praises the heart is that which gives the value. All, but this, whether brought by the highest order of angels, or the lowest order of men, is, in the sight of infinite Majesty, but a mite. You, Madam, I dare say, are well pleased, that the above criticism was not the opinion of Addison, Parnel, or dean Bayly. That which led the critics into this gross mistake was certainly the observation, that so much more of human genius hath been exhausted, and more strenuously exerted in epic and tragic poetry, nay, and in love-songs and drunken catches, than in the few Hymns that have been published; and that the success of the former hath been universal, while the latter are treated with distaste and contempt, although among all the Hymns that have ever been published, there is not one to two thousand ballads, love-songs, and drunken catches, that in the judgment of a fair critic (religion out of the question) would not be found superior both in sentiment and diction; so very little of piety is found in our taste for poetry and music. Among the men of genius very few felt any thing of religious warmth; and they wrote for the applause of a world, whereof not one in a hundred thousand, they were sensible, had a single nerve in unison with a hymn. Of this they had too many experimental proofs in our churches, where a sorry clerk, little more affected than the organ, performs a solo in the midst of a thousand pretended Christians, who have not a single note for the psalm, nor for God who gave them all they are so proud of, particularly those voices and those musical powers, which are wholly at the devotion of intoxication over a bottle, and of loose desires in the celebration of beauty.

This alienation is not less lamented by your Ladyship, than it is by

Your most respectful,

And most obedient humble servant,

PHIL. SKELTON.

In whatsoever degree Mr. Skelton may be thought to have availed himself of books published before the following dates, it cannot be supposed, that he owes any thing to such as have had a posterior birth.

The first edition of Deism Revealed was published in London 1748
The second, London 1750
The third edition, Dublin 1777
The first edition of his first two volumes of Sermons, London 1754
The second edition of said Sermons, and the sole edition of the third, Dublin 1777
The sole edition of Thoughts on Predestination, Dublin 1777
Letter to the authors of Divine Analogy and of the Minute Philosopher;—Truth in a Mask;—The Consultation;—The Candid Reader;—Vindication of the Bishop of Winchester;—Proposals for the Revival of Christianity;—Dissertation on a Petty Jury;—Chevalier's Hopes;—Necessity of Tillage and Granaries;—All these were published between the years 1734 & 1745
His other Opuscula were not published before . 1777

AN

APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE

ON THE SUBJECT OF

CHRISTIANITY.

As it is certain, Christianity was given for the bulk of mankind, who neither are, nor ever can be, what the world calls learned; it is equally certain, that the knowledge of it must lie open to common sense, that is to the perception and capacity of the multitude. To understand and believe it, and to live up to its moral rules and precepts, as far as the infirmities of human nature will permit, or in other words, as far as its author requires, no long, tedious, subtle arguings, no deep learning or philosophy, are necessary. Of these the unlearned are incapable. By these, and their own vanity, the learned have been miserably bewildered, and led far away from the divine simplicity and wisdom of our holy religion, the fundamental articles whereof are few, and equally intelligible to all capacities. Some shorter and easier way therefore, than that of the learned, must be taken to clear up all controversies among Christians; and before this can be done, the teacher, the divine, must level himself (and why not, for God hath done it!) to the apprehension of the vulgar first, and then to their modes of thinking and reasoning, I say reasoning, for they can reason, and that with a force and clearness on subjects of far more difficulty, than those of religion, fully equal to the reasonings of such as (it is hard to say whether therein blessed or cursed) have passed their youth under the influence of the most refined education. This is evident in their discussions on points of property, wherein these plain men happen to be concerned as parties. To clear up a necessary point of religion, wherein every thing is made incomparably more easy, requires not half the capacity. Such points therefore should by their teachers be brought

down and home to their understandings in short instructions, familiarly expressed. About sixty or seventy years ago, there was a poor man in Dublin, who earned a scanty subsistence on a loom, but found time on Sundays to read the Scriptures, and a few other books of easy digestion. This man entered, in the shops, streets, &c. into frequent controversies with Jesuits, and other abettors of Popery, wherein he was thought, at least by Protestants, to have generally the advantage. After some time, a Jesuit of more than common eminence gave him a challenge to enter into an argument with him in the Tholsel of Dublin, on a day and hour prefixed. A vast concourse of people, and some bishops, assembled on the remarkable occasion. The Jesuit asked him, Where was his religion before Harry the Eighth? The weaver, looking attentively at his countenance, as if he there observed somewhat extraordinary, asked him, if he had washed his face that morning, and had an affirmative answer. Where then, said the weaver, was your face before you washed it? Here ended the dispute in a very sensible peal of laughter, set up by common sense. This poor man, whose name is lost, as that of the poor man in Ecclesiastes, who saved a city by his wise counsel, knew perfectly well, that our reformers did not undertake, as the Genevians did, to form a new church, but to reform the church of England. There are thousands in the lowest class of mankind, who might be ranked with this modern Socrates, did they search for information, as he did, and were they not frightened from that search by the parade of knowledge, falsely so called, in the upper classes, among which good sense is rarely met with, or lost in a wilderness of words.

To you, the Peters, the Andrews, the Nathaniels, &c. of the present times, whether you hold a plough, handle a spade, carry a musket, work a ship, serve a gentleman, or sweat at a trade, I turn myself, and appeal to your common sense, from that haughty philosophy, which hath begotten such an infinity of absurdities and blasphemies, for the divinity of Christ Jesus and his religion. In addressing you, the plainest of mankind, I shall endeavour to be as plain and as easily understood as your language and mine shall allow me to be. God, of his infinite mercy, and by his Holy Spirit, enable me to speak the truth with power, and you to read or

hear it with profit; in which prayer I earnestly call upon you to join with all the fervour of your hearts, that the God of truth may guard you against the errors of me and every teacher, and against all the arts of false prophets, and 'guide you into all truth.' But do not presume to hope, that God will either guard or guide you, if you do not give your minds to instruction, and use your own honest endeavours. By nature you know nothing of religion, but by that very nature, feeble and corrupt as it is, you are made teachable and capable of religious knowledge, sufficient for your own salvation. This knowledge is most easily attained, and the means of attaining to it lie so open to you, that if you neglect them, you must remain, not only inexcusable, but guilty of all the blood shed for you by the prophets, the apostles, and Christ himself; for so much it cost to purchase these means for you, on the right use of which your eternal happiness absolutely depends. Put therefore this question of Christ home to your hearts, 'What shall it profit us, if we should gain the whole world and lose our own souls?'

Having thus done justice to the common sense of your heads, let me now ask you how hard you would labour, and how far would you go, for such an annual fortune as should raise you, during the remainder of your lives, above the necessity of working for bread, which you must so soon part with, even if you should succeed in your endeavour? and why your common sense should not rouse you to a small share of those labours, journeys, and endeavours, for 'the bread of eternal life, which, if you eat of, you shall live for ever in joy and glory unutterable?' And let me also, by way of appeal to the common sense of your hearts, now ask you, what gratitude, what love, those hearts should feel for the prince, who should settle a large estate upon you in this world? and what then is due from you to the King of kings, and the Prince of peace, for an everlasting crown and kingdom, offered to you, which he hath purchased for you with his blood? If you believe this, and I suppose you do, how are you lost to common sense, and sunk below the dignity of a horse or dog, that love their feeders and benefactors, if you do not labour to know your Saviour and his religion, and labour to serve him, to honour him, with that knowledge of religion, in a life governed by that religion.

Whether in this I am speaking to men, brutes, or devils, after a long life spent in this very work, I, now on the verge of eternity, am going once more to try.

The order of this appeal, you will easily see, requires that it should set out with calling you to a serious consideration of yourselves. I appeal then to your common sense and experience, whether you do not find your understandings incapable of discovering, without help or instruction, a right knowledge of the true religion; whether you can hope to reform your sinful corruptions, and become good and happy men, without that knowledge; whether the goodness of God hath not afforded you the means of a knowledge, so necessary to you; whether if he hath, you can, as men of common sense, rest a moment in ignorance of those means, since while you do, you expose yourselves to somewhat more than the danger of everlasting misery; whether poor and weak as you are now in your mortal bodies, you have not, each of you, a living soul, which must be happy or miserable for ever; whether you have in yourselves a power to preserve your health and understanding, or to prolong your lives, for a single moment, without having recourse to the providence of God for his protection; whether you are, by your own understanding and strength, able to provide food, raiment, or the comforts of life, without the guidance and assistance of the same good Providence; and lastly, whether you can reasonably hope for either, in regard to soul or body, while you continue to trust to your poor ignorant and weak selves, the wind, the weather, or the world, and stupidly neglect the knowledge of God and his religion, which you might easily obtain in a few hours. Can God be pleased with such behaviour, or count you for his servants or children? Is he not wise? And does he not see where you have placed your hearts and affections? These things I say, as to men asleep (which possibly you may be) in order to awaken you. Or, do you believe, there is no God? While you continue unconcerned about religion, you surely act, as if you did not believe in him who made you, and the world for you; in him who governs whatsoever he hath made, and will infallibly call you to an account for your wilful ignorance of him, and the laws by which he hath over and over again declared, he will judge you. Your ignorance is your

greatest sin, and never can be pleaded as an excuse for your other sins, whereof it is the cause and fountain. Let your common sense say, whether there is a God, or not; whether there is any more than one God; whether he is not possessed of all wisdom, justice, goodness, and power, as is too plain to be doubted by any one, who reads his word, or beholds his works; whether as an all-knowing God, you can hide from him any thought, word, or action of your whole lives; whether, as a just God, he will not judge you for them all, fully reward your obedience, or punish your rebellion; and lastly, whether as a good God, there is not with him 'forgiveness and plenteous redemption' for all who truly repent of their sins, and with all their hearts turn to him from a vain, vexatious, and wicked world. If your faith hath not this happy effect, I ask it, and your common sense, whether you do not, with the 'devils, believe and tremble?' I ask your common sense and conscience, how it is possible for you to believe these truths, and yet lead an ungodly life? And if you do not believe them, nor think it worth your while to inquire about them, I ask your common sense (if one so extremely blind can be possessed of it in the lowest degree) how you can step forward, through life and death to eternity, without a guide? This poor attempt of mine would bring your hand to that of an unerring guide. To him, as a miserable blind man, I have given my own hand, and it was my common sense, that led me to him, for, hearing his voice, I perceived where he was to be found. If I do not withdraw my hand from his, I shall no longer, as formerly, go astray.

In the next place, this kind of knowledge, which you cannot draw forth from within yourselves, nor gather from your observations on the works of God, though they so fully support it with the strongest evidence, Rom. i. 19. as soon as it is but hinted to you, which you are by your common sense so sufficiently qualified to apprehend and understand, and which you so greatly want, you can hardly suppose, without calling his goodness in question, that he should have refused it to you. No, he certainly did communicate it to the first men, and they handed it down to the following generations, so that even in the most dark and barbarous ages it was never wholly lost, although much im-

paired and corrupted by inventions of men, who could not possibly have consulted with common sense, when they, instead of worshipping the true and only God, began to offer sacrifices and prayer to the sun, moon, and stars, to dead kings, and conquerors, to stocks and stones; that is, began to 'worship the creature even as the Creator,' in which gross absurdity and wickedness they must have probably gone on till now, had not God graciously interposed by a more clear and universal revelation to open their eyes, and recall them, in the use of their common sense, to a right knowledge of 'his eternal power and godhead,' of themselves, and of the world they are placed in.

But before mankind had so far lost the use of their reason, they had, through the horrible sin of their common parents, been sunk in blindness, and an outrageous irregularity of all their passions. Now this was the sin of their common parents, that the woman believed in, and trusted to the promise of an evil spirit, speaking to her in the form of a serpent, and the first man believed in the woman, rather than the word of God, and so both transgressed the commandment of their Maker. It was a want of faith in God, together with pride, and a love of pleasure, that tempted Adam and Eve to these two horrible sins, the immediate effect and punishment of which was a deadly corruption of mind and body in both, and an impossibility of producing any children, untainted with the same corruption, the same defect of understanding, and the same violence of passion. This is properly called, original sin, as being the first sin of man, and the spring of all our sins. Eating the forbidden fruit was in itself a very heinous sin, for it was a transgression of God's commandment; but the crimes which led to this transgression were of a nature most offensive and horrible. Adam and Eve disbelieved the word, and distrusted the truth, of their Maker, who had placed them in a state of the highest human happiness. They gave their faith to the devil, speaking by the tongue of the serpent, and then flew in the face of their Maker, in obedience to their pride and sensual appetites, by doing violence to his commandment. The same perversion of faith from God, to pride, appetite, and the devil; the same perversion of obedience from God to pride, appetite, and the devil; that is, to faith and trust

in, and obedience to, a mixture of brute and devil, hath gone down through all the miserable posterity of these two shocking offenders. The recovery, therefore, of mankind to their duty and happiness can be no otherwise brought about, but by an utter distrust of the seducers, and an entire restoration of faith and obedience to God and his word. That distrust should be wrought in us by our miseries and fears; that faith and obedience, by our hopes of eternal happiness.

See the consequence of departing from the use of that common sense, wherewith God had, in their state of innocence, endowed the first man and woman more plentifully, as it is reasonable to believe, than their posterity have since enjoyed it under a universal corruption of mind and body, to which we are subject, but more especially by means of that pride and fondness for pleasure, the chief fountains of idolatry, infidelity, and all our other vices. These, which fouled the spring, foul likewise all the streams. Thus 'sin entered by one man,' the representative of all men, and 'death by sin hath passed on all men.' For this sin our first parents were expelled from Paradise into this world of labour, of vanity, and vexation; and unhappy Adam soon began to taste the bitter fruits of his own crime in the death of his best son, murdered by the hands of his worst, the introduction to all the barbarous persecutions, since raised by the old dragon against the followers of Abel, for the true religion.

Hence idolatry. Hence the lewd worship of lewd gods. Hence the cruel worship of cruel gods. Hence the brutish worship of brutish gods. And hence have proceeded all the horrible crimes of mankind, which blacken the history of the world in almost every page. During the long reign of stupidity in perfection, and of wickedness so abominable, so unnatural, so monstrous, that even very bad men are shocked at the recital of it. Tired of old truth, and fond of novelty, they invented new religions, and manufactured new gods, with eyes like their own that could not see, with ears like their own that could not hear, and as void of sense and thought as themselves. Nothing was ever so ridiculous as their new religions, excepting their new gods. They were miserable bunglers at both. Before their trade of making gods was improved into something like an art, if one of their

scurvy gods could possibly have had the power to do it, he must have damned his maker for the hideous figure he was forced to make. Of these some are yet preserved as curiosities. But when the knack of god-making was farther improved, and the artificer could compliment his god with somewhat according to 'the beauty of a man,' yet he had not the sense to consider, that this his god was but a stick, a stone, or a lump of metal. No, but to excuse his stupidity, he maintained, it was useful to teach the ignorant some knowledge of, and veneration for, a divine being. How! did he think a stick could be like a divinity? Could he be fool enough to imagine that a dumb stone could teach any thing? 'Had not a deceived heart turned him aside, that he could not deliver his soul, nor say, Have I not a lie in my right hand?' If he had not been wholly deprived of common sense, why did he not say with Habakkuk, 'What profiteth the molten image, that teacher of lies? Woe unto him, that saith to the wood, Awake, to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach. Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it.' Can there be men, calling themselves Christians, that go to a god-smith, as they do to a lock-smith for the one, or the other, utensil? Men are less inexcusable in worshipping beasts, creeping things, or any the meanest work of God, than this despicable trumpery of deities, made by themselves, or bought from another, cheapening, and differing sometimes for a halfpenny in the price of a god, or a saint, to be worshipped as a god. Where was, or is, common sense all the time? It was felt by few, and followed by none, not always by Noah, Lot, Moses, David, or Solomon.—O Solomon! where was thy common sense fled to, when thou wast on thy knees to a block of stone, or a log of wood? All this while, did not common sense want instruction? No, the pride originally infused, taught mankind to depend on their own wisdom, and rendered them unteachable. Here and there, indeed, pride set up its philosophers, those senseless reasoners on the nature of things, sometimes those presumptuous reasoners on the nature of God, or rather of the abominable gods their foolish forefathers had erected. Each of these philosophers was attended by a small number of equally conceited disciples, who hoped to parade it on the

drivel of their teachers. Some of their books are still preserved, wherein ignorance and vanity, for the most part, come forth in fine language, like rotten beaux in gold lace, to challenge the admiration of literary fops, equally vain, and equally empty. It is your happiness, that you are not qualified by learning, falsely so called, to keep them company. It is a poor sort of education, that, under the pretence of teaching a man abundance of uncommon sense, only teaches him that he is a fool, and leaves him still a greater. I might say somewhat more on this too fruitful subject, had not St. Paul sufficiently warned you to treat all philosophy with contempt. 1 Cor. i. at the end.

Here now you may ask, why did God suffer the world to sit so long in darkness? It is fitter you should ask this question of God than of me; and when you do, will have as good a right to add another, namely, why his providence hath bestowed more health and riches on you, than on your neighbour, now pining on a sick bed for want of necessaries? As to you and your neighbour, even I can return you a sort of answer. Probably the poor man may be the better man for his afflictions, at least better than you, who suffer him to perish for want of a small share of that wealth wherewith you are unhappily intrusted. But as to the providential dispensations of religious light, had I, in that matter, been of council with God, I should certainly not have given my opinion against his manner of proceeding, nor would you, without cavilling at that saying, that 'man was made upright, but sought out to himself many inventions;' that is, many arts to gratify his pride and his love of pleasure. Can you, dare you say, the infinitely wise, good, and powerful God made you no other, than that miserably foolish and corrupt creature, which you find yourself to be? You will not surely so much as suspect your Creator was the author of all that folly, and all those crimes which you, with the aid of the devil, have contrived and executed during the sinful part of your life. This is too absurd and blasphemous for common sense to be guilty of. Yes, but you still think it surprising, that God for some thousands of years should have deferred that revelation, which he himself, at length, thought fit to give. Here you are grossly mistaken, for he did not so defer it. He gave it to Adam; he gave it to

Noah, the two common parents of all mankind. Immediately after the fall of man, he gave us the promise of a Redeemer, 'who should bruise the head of the serpent,' both by reclaiming us from, and atoning for, our sins; for as the serpent, or tempter, had brought sin and death into the world, and had made himself the head in his kingdom of darkness, thus only by banishing sin and death out of the world, could that head be bruised. Now it was, that the Son of God, the Creator of the world, the great Redeemer, 'the light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world,' undertook to be, in due time, our teacher, and to die for our sins, and so hath been entitled 'the Lamb, slain,' by promise, 'from the foundation of the world.' It was now also, that repentance, faith, and sacrifices were appointed to record the blessed promise, to shadow to us the true and real sacrifice, and to carry back to those of the old world, who should repent and believe in it, all the merits and benefits of that sacrifice.

So early was the true religion afforded to the transgressing race of mankind; than which method of redemption, I appeal to your common sense, whether any other more reasonable, more worthy of infinite goodness, or more fitted to your wants, can be conceived.

Short-sighted as we are in the ways of divine providence, common sense may easily judge, what must have become of revelation, had it been finally and completely imparted to mankind in the first ages of the world, by an almost total departure from so much as was vouchsafed ere the time of Noah and the general deluge; and by the gross idolatry, and horrible vices, which prevailed, after that dreadful judgment, in the short space of four or five hundred years. Again, what records of its truth could have been kept before the use of letters? Almost as early as men became acquainted with letters, the original revelation was recorded in writing by Moses, together with the fall of man which made that revelation intelligible and necessary, and a law also revealed and written, which signally prepared the way for its final completion. If these instances from antiquity are not, what we know of ourselves and the age we live in, are sufficient to prove this melancholy truth, that human nature hath, ever since its original corruption, been other-

wise, unaccountably averse to true religion; and that, when men could not shake it off entirely, they were ever ready to pervert it into an indulgence to their own notions or wishes, howsoever ridiculous or impious. To the great scheme of revealed religion, and its final completion in Christ Jesus, throughout the remainder of this appeal, I mean to confine myself, perfectly satisfied, that your common sense will agree with mine, and will second the wisdom of the Holy Ghost speaking by St. Paul, and insisting that 'all things are but dross,' compared with the knowledge of Jesus Christ; I beg therefore, for the love of God, that you and I may, in humble imitation of this saint, 'determine to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.' This is that great concern, worthy the attention of common sense, for which all others ought rather entirely to be set aside, or so slightly minded, as that the whole man may in the sight of God, and of the human race, appear to be lost in the Christian.

To begin then, common sense, I insist, assures us all, that there is a God, and but one only God, possessed, from all eternity, of all wisdom, justice, goodness, and power; of and by whom are all created beings.

Common sense will, I trust, ere this little work is brought to an end, fully satisfy us, that this one only God is the Father, is the Son, and is the Holy Ghost.

But in the mean time, the same common sense must convince us, that from the infinite goodness of God, it hath always been most reasonable in us to hope for a redemption from the sin and misery into which we were led by the transgression of our first parents, so far as this redemption may be effected by the goodness of God, without departing from his infinite justice, or destroying our moral liberty.

We have already seen, and surely agreed, that the good God encouraged this our reasonable hope, by entering immediately into this work of our redemption on our fall from original righteousness; that our faith was then carried forward to a son of Eve, as our Redeemer; that sacrifices, representing the death of this son, and conveying to the world, before that death, the pardon procured by it for all who should believe in him, and repent of their sins, were appointed by God himself; and that one day in seven was

likewise set apart from worldly work and business, to afford time for mankind to inquire after God, to pray to him, and praise him, for his mercies. This we firmly believe on the same authority. We are also told, that, at the same time, the love of the sexes, and the propagation of posterity, were regulated and sanctified by marriage in an express law of God.

In the first chapter of Genesis, and the four first verses of the second, Moses often mentioning the Creator, always speaks of him by the name of God only; but immediately after, when his account becomes more particular concerning the creation of our first parents, and their transgression, together with the promise of a Redeemer, he repeatedly speaks of him by the name of the Lord God. There must, I think, be some reason for this change; perhaps that reason may be found in the last words of the fourth chapter, where, in the first and best translation of the Old Testament, Enos (which signifies a fallen man) is said to have hoped to call upon the name of the Lord God. Now, the Lord is that particular title whereby our Saviour is almost every where styled in both Testaments. To me, therefore, it seems most natural, that fallen man should then begin to hope in, and call upon the promised Redeemer, 'that Lord, that God, that seed of the woman, that lamb slain' for the sins of men, by engagement with his Father, 'from the foundation of the world,' whom the bloody sacrifices had been appointed to represent, by whom alone it was possible then, as it still is, 'to come to the Father.'

Of these blessed appointments, and this gracious promise, our merciful God never lost sight, though the generality of mankind, in too great a measure did; for which, after a space of about sixteen hundred years, God swept away the whole guilty race of mankind by a flood of waters, Noah and seven other persons only excepted. That Christ and his Spirit were with Noah, when he preached repentance, immediately before the flood, to the old world, is plain from 1 Pet. iii. 18—20; and that, in like manner, he was with the following prophets, is equally certain in the same epistle, chap. i. 10, 11; for, indeed, who is there among them (not excepting even Balaam) that does not speak of his coming, the light of his gospel, his sufferings, and his triumphs, so

as to draw the attention of all their readers to the great Redeemer?

The oldest custom, properly so called, in the world, is, I believe, that which hath been practised every where, in countries producing the olive, of carrying a branch of that tree as a token of peace and amity in one nation towards another. This custom I doubt not, was derived from the leaf or twig, taken from thence, and brought to Noah in the ark by the dove, as a proof that the judgment by waters was past, and as a proclamation of peace on the part of God, to the second race of mankind, to be perpetuated by the rainbow. Hence the Holy Spirit, represented by a dove, and hence his spiritual unction, figured by the oil extracted from the fruit of that tree. From hence probably is derived another custom, almost as ancient, of anointing such persons as were set apart for any of the offices held most sacred among the posterity of Noah, insomuch that our Redeemer himself takes his title of Messiah, or Christ, literally from it.

Through this second father of mankind he revived his original appointments, under the awful sense of his late dreadful judgment; and now again, in this new father, gave a universal preacher of righteousness to the succeeding generations.

Notwithstanding all this, as I have already observed, a few ages only had passed, till the human race, averse to religious goodness, began at least, to forsake the true God, to worship false gods, and to pollute themselves with such hideous crimes, as it is shocking even to name, excepting by a recollection of the example made of them to the rest of mankind, in a shower of fire and brimstone, whereby a considerable number of populous cities, with all their abominable inhabitants, were totally consumed.

It was at this time, that God, still intent on mercy, in the midst of his fiery indignation at sin, called his faithful servant Abraham from an idolatrous nation, into a country then less estranged from true religion; and, for his righteous faith and obedience, chose him and his posterity out of a most wicked world to be his own peculiar people, promising, that 'in his seed,' that is, 'in the great Redeemer, all the nations of the earth should be blessed.'

Ere this promise was fully and finally given, Abraham

had offered the tenth of the spoils he had taken in war to Melchisedek, 'priest of the high God, and king of Salem,' and was blessed by Melchisedek.

Who this great person was, of whom St. Paul saith, Heb. vii. that 'he had neither father nor mother, nor beginning nor end of days,' hath been matter of conjecture. For my own part, I cannot help taking the saint's words in their strict and literal sense, not only because they are the words of the Holy Ghost, but necessary, in that sense, to the argument he pursues in that chapter. To me it seems to follow, that he was Christ himself; the word 'Melchisedek' signifying 'king of righteousness,' and the word 'Salem,' signifying 'king of peace,' titles too high for any but Christ, our righteousness and the Prince of Peace, our high priest, and our king. That, so long before his incarnation, he should have appeared as a man, when as yet, he had, to human apprehension, neither a father nor a mother, ought not to appear strange to the readers of holy Scripture, wherein superior and spiritual beings are so often found to have made the same appearance, as occasion required; and especially as we shall soon perceive, that he did visibly appear to Moses, and most probably to Jacob and Joshua. Who, but he, by whom the world was made, and was to be redeemed, should be so naturally expected to found a royal order of priesthood, which was to last for ever? or attend to the confirmation of faith in that expectation of an eternal high priest, whose coming and suffering in the flesh was to take away sin and the guilt of sin?

From the date of this promise given to Abraham and renewed to Isaac and Jacob, of a Redeemer to come, in due time, for the salvation of all men, the preparation made for his arrival was carried on in the posterity of that patriarch by revelations, prophecies, miracles, captivities, deliverances, and conquests; whereof I am going to remind you by a distinct and short account, for the truth of which as facts, and their singular use as expedients to promote the great purpose of Providence, already mentioned, I appeal to your common sense, as well qualified as mine, to judge in this matter.

To the same also I mean to appeal, in passing, on a remarkable place in the book of Job, as applicable to the business in hand, although that excellent man should not

have descended from Abraham, and yet the land of Uz, where he dwelt, did certainly belong to the Edomites.

The great Redeemer, still attentive to the faith of Abraham's posterity, as the angel or messenger of his Father, but in the appearance of a man, met Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, at Peniel, Gen. xxxii. and suffering himself to be prevailed with in wrestling, changed his name from Jacob to Israel, for 'as a prince he had power with God and with men.' On which, without that reproof, which the apostle John received when he was about to worship a mere angel, Rev. xxii. 9, 'See thou do it not,' he was adored by this patriarch, who said, 'I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.' Either therefore this act of worship was an innocent idolatry (than which nothing more absurd can be supposed) or the being worshipped was God, and appearing as a man, must have been the Redeemer of mankind. As from this Israel was to descend a great and numerous people, and the Redeemer himself; as many troubles and great trials were to fall upon him from his sons, and the yet unsettled state of his family, in a country where he was still but a sojourner; the extraordinary encouragement, abovementioned and afforded, was by the good God judged requisite, for after all, when he was very old, he declared, that 'few and evil had been his days.'

In the book of Job, one of the most ancient in the world, and always in the hands of the Israelites, as a part of their most sacred Scriptures, we find the friends of this righteous man violently insisting on an argument held by all our present infidels, namely, that virtue is its own sufficient reward, and vice its own full punishment, in this life. In consequence of this false principle, they consider all the afflictions of this good man as punishments justly due from God for the wicked and hypocritical life, which they take it for granted, he had led. In answer to these upbraidings, Job is often provoked to justify himself as a good man, and sometimes to shew too great a dependence on his own righteousness; and appeals to the justice of God, before which no man can stand, so as in the bitterness of his soul, even to challenge his Maker to an argument on the subject of his innocence. Thus, as is usual in such cases, the dispute is carried to extremes on both sides. The good man, however,

towards the latter end of the 19th chapter, seems more soberly to recollect himself, and to declare a dependence on his Redeemer, who, he believes, will at the last day, deliver him out of his afflictions, raise him up to life, 'though his reins' were then, or soon to be by death, 'consumed within him.' This faith in the Lord as his justifier and redeemer makes good his plea, and ought to have silenced his accusers, though, like other infidel disputants, they go on to rail and argue. In my humble opinion, the three verses I refer to, should be taken as the best key to this most admirable book, and to the important argument handled by Job and his untoward comforters. On both sides, a thousand excellent things are said, excellent I mean in themselves, but not always applicable to the clearing up of the point in question. As in almost all disputes among men, so in this, truth and error are intermixed on both sides. In this life the bad man is often permitted to prosper, for a trial of our faith; and is sometimes punished, for an example to others. In this life also Providence sometimes prospers a much better man, for our encouragement, and frequently suffers him to be afflicted, that he, and such men, may learn to place their hopes in a better life. But, as all men, even the best of men, are 'concluded under sin,' so properly and truly speaking, no man hath reason to look for a reward in either world, merely on account of his own righteousness, but on the imputed righteousness of Christ alone. When therefore he is made happy, his happiness is called a reward, not in the strict sense of the word, because it is the effect of that faith, which God hath given him, and those good works, which he hath enabled him to perform. For this reason, taking the argument, as the friends of Job here take it, in the lump, and as Job himself seems in some measure to take it, the dispute can never be ended by man, nor Job's amazement at his own miseries, ended, but by God himself, who in the Christian religion hath fully cleared up the confusion on both sides; but here by a display of his majesty, hath imposed silence on both parties, as men who did 'but darken counsel by words without knowledge.' As Job however had by faith put his trust in the great Redeemer, that Redeemer rebukes the mistaken severity of his uncharitable accusers, and in their sight restores him to a happier

condition, even in this life, than he had been deprived of by the malice of the devil; a malice, which, as far as he hath been permitted, he hath discharged on Christ himself, and on all the faithful servants of Christ.

Joseph, the great-grandson of Abraham, was by the cruelty of his brothers, but overruled by divine providence, sent into Egypt, the then most populous and knowing country in the world, to save that country, and the neighbouring nations, from a famine, which otherwise must have proved the ruin of them all. This he did by that foresight into futurity, and that extraordinary wisdom, wherewith God had endowed him. Here you see a kind of redeemer, already commissioned to save.

On his account an invitation was given by the king of Egypt to his father Jacob, and all his family, to come into that country, and live on the provision made for them by Joseph; and here Jacob dying, prophesied, that the posterity of his son Judah should not finally cease to possess some share of political power, till Shiloh, peace, that is, the Prince of Peace, or the great Redeemer, should come.

In this country the descendants of Jacob, who came only in number sixty-six males, lived separate from the Egyptians, who hated them because they were shepherds, in the land of Goshen, a particular province of Egypt, until they were increased to the number of six hundred thousand, at which time they were barbarously oppressed by the then king of Egypt.

There it was that God sent Moses to deliver them out of their bondage. But the Egyptian tyrant would not suffer them to depart until he and his wicked people had been repeatedly terrified with a number of dreadful plagues, in a most miraculous manner inflicted on them, through the ministry of Moses, by the immediate hand of God. By these at length, the tyrant, forced to consent, permitted them to leave the country. No sooner, however, had they set out on their journey, than he, a monster of folly and infidelity, recovering from his fright, pursued them with all his forces, and hemmed them in between his army behind, and the sea before them. Now it was that God stood between his people and their enemies, and Moses by his command, having struck the sea with his rod, the waters fell back on each

hand, and 'stood like a wall' on the right and left, whereby a dry and safe passage was laid open to his people. They entered, and arrived on the farther shore. The tyrant and his Egyptians followed, but the sea then 'returned to its strength,' and overwhelmed them all. This the surviving Egyptians saw from their side of the sea. This the Hebrews saw from the other, and Moses recorded it in writing, witnessed by both nations. From this, their journey to the good land, which God had promised them through their ancestors Abraham, &c., and now again through Moses, lay their way along a dry and barren wilderness, where food and water were seldom to be found. This people appear to have almost wholly forgotten their God, during their long captivity in Egypt, and in consequence of that forgetfulness, notwithstanding the gracious and miraculous deliverance, which he had so lately afforded them, were with the greatest difficulty brought to a very small degree of faith in his power, or of reliance on his goodness. Pride and the love of pleasure, those original sins of the devil, and their first parents, held them in a state of bondage, worse than that of Egypt. Their pride taught them to rebel, and was not half humbled by the opening of the earth, and the swallowing up of a multitude, whom no miracles could convince or soften. And the love of pleasure did but raise in these slaves of appetite, a wish to return to 'the flesh-pots of Egypt,' though to all the hardships of their former bondage. The rocks were cloven to supply them with water. Showers of quails, the most delicious of all wild fowl, and showers of angels' food, were poured on them from heaven; and yet they disbelieved and murmured. When they came to countries inhabited, they had enemies more numerous and powerful than themselves to fight with, whom God nevertheless delivered into their hands, as people still more corrupt and wicked than themselves. They were doubters, but these were idolators. They were murmurers, these were plunged in vices contrary to nature. How in this piece of history is the stubbornness of mankind, and the patience of God exemplified! The following part of their history may serve to set both in yet a stronger light. Did not God, you will be apt to cry out, foresee the infidelity and hardened temper of this people? Why then did he choose them for his peculiar?

It is not common sense that starts this latter question, because it ought to know, that perhaps a better could not be found. Do the people of these countries, and at these times, by their sense of religion, recommend themselves better to such a choice? God did perfectly foresee the temper of these Hebrews, and declared to them, that he did not choose them for 'their goodness or righteousness.' Nay, it may yet appear probable, before we have done, that he chose them because he foreknew them to be a most stiff-necked and ungovernable race. Let us wave this for the present, and observe, that God gave these people in writing by the pen of Moses, a law, by far more excellent, than had been ever given by any other lawgiver, yet purposely loaded it with so many ceremonies and rites, as made it more difficult to be kept in practice than any other law, not improbably because they were so stubborn a people, and because they were to be widely distinguished from all other people, and wholly estranged from the rites and usages of their idolatrous neighbours. The prodigious number and frequency of their sacrifices makes a considerable part of the burden laid on them, but was appointed with a farther and higher view. In these were recalled to human attention the animal sacrifices, appointed from the fall of man, and through them the great and only effectual sacrifice, whereof they were types and shadows, for, of themselves, they neither had, nor could have, any power to atone for sin. The paschal lamb and the scape-goat were peculiarly intended to represent, beforehand, and apply the real atonement to be made by the blood of Christ Jesus for the sins of all men. This whole law, as St. Paul observes, but more especially the sacrifices, was intended 'as a school-master' to 'bring the Jews to Christ;' and, with all possible submission, I add, the Jews were intended, as school-masters, to bring the Gentiles to Christ. For the still higher confirmation of faith, among the Hebrews, and also among the Gentiles, in the expected Redeemer, that Redeemer repeatedly shewed himself to Moses, in the Wilderness, conversed with him, shewed him his 'back-parts,' Exod. xxxiii. 23, nay, 'spake to him face to face,' Exod. xxxiii. 11, called himself the 'I AM,' Exod. iii. 14, as he did afterward to the Jews, John viii. 58, and to his apostles, Matt. xxviii. 20, by which

name no other being is ever called, but the one eternal God. He says also, Rev. i. 'I am the first and the last;' and the Lord God saith, Isa. xliv. 6, 'I am the first and the last, and beside me there is no God.' This was that God of the Old Testament who gave the law by Moses, and said in his first commandment, 'Thou shalt have no other gods, but me.' This was Christ, whose 'Reproach Moses esteemed greater riches, than the treasures of Egypt;' Heb. xi. 26. This was that Christ, whom some of the blaspheming 'Israelites tempted, and were destroyed of serpents,' 1 Cor. x. 9; and of these Israelites was Christ the great sacrifice and Redeemer, and of them were his first apostles. Of them also were the slayers of this sacrifice, and those men, who put the truth of his resurrection and religion to the test of death, for the satisfaction of distant countries, and following ages. Caiaphas, with the Scribes and Pharisees, and Pontius Pilate, as priests, offered up this sacrifice, and the apostles preached it to the world, and died to prove the truth of what they preached. Long before, Moses also preached up Christ in these words, speaking to the Israelites, 'The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me,' that is, 'a prophet, a lawgiver, and a mediator; him ye shall hear.' For their astonishing blindness, infidelity, ingratitude, idolatry, and disobedience in the Wilderness, after seeing so many miracles, wrought by God in their behalf; see the confession of the Jews in the seventy-eighth and one hundred and sixth Psalms, and Neh. ix.

As soon as Moses had conducted the Israelites into a part of the promised land, he died, and Joshua was appointed to lead them forward to a conquest of the rest. This Joshua and Caleb were the only men who had seen the passage through the Red Sea, all the rest having died for their sins in the forty years' journey through the Wilderness. The name Joshua, is the same with Jesus, and signifies a Saviour, for this good man was appointed to save the Israelites from their enemies, and to subdue those enemies. Here is a very expressive allegory, wherein the Wilderness represents this world; Jordan, death; and the delightful land of promise, heaven. Joshua took the command of the people under the direction of God, at that season of the year, when there was always

such a flood in the river Jordan, as laid its banks, and a considerable part of the country on each side, under water. Yet here, in this very season, the whole multitude passed to the other side, without a bridge or boats, for God was pleased to keep up the waters on the right hand, while they ran off on the left, until his people had gone over on the dry bottom of the channel. This, if any thing, must have encouraged the faith and trust of the Hebrews, and so terrified the Canaanites, whose wickedness was then ripe for judgment, as to make the conquest of them a much easier task, than otherwise it might have been to a people, who had but lately began to learn the art of war.

To encourage to the uttermost the faith and reliance of Joshua and the Hebrews, the great Redeemer, of whom this leader was a remarkable type, appeared to him, Josh. v. This leader of the Hebrews had, ere this, received several revelations and directions from the Lord. But now was the time when he and his army most wanted encouragement and assistance. He had a people to command of little faith and little courage, ever ready to murmur and rebel, a stubborn and stiff-necked generation, like their fathers, more apt to insult their governor, than face their enemy, and but raw in arms. With these he was to invade a most numerous and warlike people, among whom were many giants, inhabiting a mountainous country, full of strong towns, and narrow passes, with which they were perfectly acquainted, and he almost wholly ignorant. He had little or no provisions to hope for from the country he had left behind him, so that about six hundred thousand mouths were to be fed by their swords alone, the manna having just before ceased to fall. Humanly speaking, an attempt so rash as his, was never heard of from the creation to this day. As he was musing on these difficulties, and as it were balancing his faith and fears, he saw, at a little distance, a man with a sword drawn in his hand, to whom he went, and said, 'Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?' and was answered, 'As captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.' On which immediately Joshua fell on his face, and did 'worship him, saying, What saith my Lord unto his servant?' And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, 'Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy:

and Joshua did so. And the Lord said unto Joshua, See I have given into thine hands Jericho, its king, and its mighty men of valour.' The Lord then gave him directions how to subdue that city by miracle, and without striking a stroke. In the mean time, the five most powerful kings of Canaan were assembling all their forces, and soon after gave him battle in the open field, reasonably enough hoping to crush him, and his half-disciplined army at one blow. Here it is evident, that he who fought for Joshua had deprived them of their understanding; for had they not emptied their strong towns, to reinforce their overgrown army, and only drawn together two or three flying parties to harass the Israelites in the sieges of those towns, they must have (speaking after the manner of men) in a little time undone their adversaries. But they fought, were overthrown, and by two extraordinary miracles were cut off almost to a man. This amazing defeat was quickly followed by a surrender of their strong cities, which had been left destitute of their garrisons. Thus the whole country, with all its provisions and wealth, lay open to Joshua and his army, and such a fear fell upon the other states and kingdoms of Canaan, that for a considerable time, they scarcely thought of making any resistance. Who now was this captain of the Lord's host? this Lord, whom Joshua worshipped without reproof? this being, who made holy ground of the place whereon he stood? It was, no doubt, the I AM, the same who spoke to Moses out of the burning bush. It was the 'Captain of our salvation.' It was the 'Word of God,' who bears the 'two-edged sword,' as his peculiar sign or symbol.

A short time before the Jews were carried captives to Babylon, Ezekiel the prophet, as you may read in his eighth and ninth chapters, was favoured with an extraordinary vision of God, and heard six men or angels, to whom the Lord, or I AM, had given Jerusalem in charge, called forth. One of these was clothed in linen, the priestly garment, and had writing instruments in his hand. The other five carried destroying weapons in theirs. In the hearing of the prophet, the Lord, or Christ, commanded the man in linen to go through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark, namely, the letter Thau, which answers to T in our alphabet, upon the foreheads of all that sighed and bewailed the abomina-

tions done in that city; and then commanded the other five to follow him, and kill all the rest, but not to come near those that were marked. Thus stands the passage in the Hebrew. But why the particular letter, or mark, is not set down in our translation, I do not know, unless because the Jews and Samaritans have changed the shape of the letter, which we know they did since the days of Ezekiel. Certain it is, however, that St. Jerome, at once the most learned and judicious of the ancient fathers, hath observed, that the letter, in the true ancient Hebrew alphabet, was a cross +. It is to me equally certain, that the mark which the servants of God were ordered to receive in their foreheads, Rev. vii. was a , so early given to every Christian at admittance into the church, pursuant to our Saviour's command, 'that all his disciples should take up the cross, and follow him.' How it came to pass, that the Egyptians, Arabians, Indians, before Christ came among us, and the inhabitants of the extreme northern parts of the world, ere they had so much as heard of him, paid a remarkable veneration to the sign of the cross, is to me unknown, but the fact itself is known. In some places this sign was given to men accused of a crime, but acquitted; and in Egypt it stood for the sign or signification of eternal life. The former is the case and character of all true Christians, accused by the enemy of their salvation, but cleared and justified by faith in the blood of Christ; and the latter will as surely be the case, in which their justification is to end. Whether the custom above named, owed its original to the passage I have quoted from Ezekiel, which together with many other particulars, drawn from revelation, might have been spread about through the neighbouring nations by the Jews on their flight from the Babylonians; or had a yet earlier rise, but was misunderstood through length of time, as religion itself was, is now hard to say. But, to reason and common sense, it is as natural to suppose, that the cross and crucifixion of our Redeemer might have been predicted many ages before the event, as well as several other circumstances, not more material, of his birth, life, actions, and particularly his death, unquestionably were.

In the time of the Babylonian captivity, Nebuchadnezzar, his princes, and his subjects, had an opportunity of know-

ing the true God, when he threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the fiery furnace, for not worshipping the idol he had set up. The tyrant then saw these men walking unhurt in the midst of the fire, and with them a fourth person, of an appearance, so divine and majestic, that he took him to be the Son of God, of whom he probably had heard among the Jewish captives. Such, we at least cannot help thinking him, not only because no case, ever heard of, could more strongly invite his presence and assistance, than that of men embracing the fire rather than idolatry ; but also because in this most populous and extensive kingdom, nothing was so likely, as this astonishing fact, to spread the knowledge of the true God, and the expectation of a Redeemer in the Son of God. Not long after, in the reign of Darius, and in the same place, Daniel was thrown into a den of hungry lions, for no other offence, but openly praying to the true God, and came out alive and untouched from thence. This second miracle, if any thing, must have awakened the minds of the Babylonians and Persians to some sense of the infinite difference between the God of the Jews, and their own impotent idols. It was this very Daniel who, after this deliverance, foretelling the return of the Jews to their own country, dated the coming of Christ from the decree for their return, to follow in four hundred and ninety years. His prophecy of that decree, at least when fulfilled, and the coming of Christ, to be reckoned from it, were probably known to many of their masters, as well as to the Jews, as written in the language of the Babylonians, especially since there was no reason why the Jews should keep it a secret. On the contrary, Nebuchadnezzar published a decree throughout ' his whole kingdom, that whosoever should speak any thing amiss concerning the true God, should be cut in pieces, and his house made a dunghill.' Darius, in the same kingdom, afterward published another decree to the like effect, upon the deliverance of Daniel out of the lion's den.

It is easy now for you to see, how widely the knowledge of God and of the true religion, together with the expectation of a Redeemer, was spread by Adam among his posterity ; by Noah among his ; by Melchisedek and Abraham among the Canaanites, Philistines, &c. ; by Ishmael among the Arabians; by Lot among the Moabites and Ammonites ; by

Esau among the Edomites; by Job among the Uzzites and their neighbours; by Moses among the Egyptians, and all the nations bordering on the Wilderness; Balaam himself assisting in this work, against his will, among the Moabites, &c.; by Naaman and the host sent to Dothan, on their return from Samaria, among the Syrians; by Agur, wheresoever he lived; by Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, and Daniel, among the Babylonians, Medes, Persians; and by the prophecies of the last throughout the Greek empire, for the Jewish high-priest shewed those prophecies to Alexander the Great, which foretold his conquests in the east. And as to the Roman empire, which had subdued the western world, when its arms began to prevail in the east, this day-spring began to dawn upon it, and in a few ages rose to its full brightness; and Christ, subduing the conquerors of mankind, 'divided the spoil with the strong.' To the great persons who believed in Christ, before he came into the world, or at least wrote and spoke of him, in ancient ages, and in countries far distant from those I have mentioned, I could add some more, as Confucius in China, Zoroaster in Persia, and Plato in Greece; in whose writings a prophetic expectation of his coming seems to be expressed, even with some notion of a Trinity, and with somewhat more of clearness, as to both, in the very ancient books of the Chinese; but I pass them by as persons and writings not placed within the extent of your reading.

But to return, Joshua having survived the settlement of the Israelites, about twenty years, and judged them wisely and religiously, departed this life.

So far your common sense must be satisfied that God did every thing that was reasonable to be done in order to feed the faith of this numerous family, and a firm trust in his promise of a redeemer, made to Abraham, or rather in that renewal of the same promise, made to Adam, immediately after our fall into sin and corruption; every thing, I mean, that was requisite to keep up the expectation of this redeemer in the minds of all the religiously attentive.

Yet soon after the death of Joshua, and of the fathers, who outlived him, they began to lose sight of this promise, to forsake the Lord, to despise his law, and to worship the gods of those idolatrous nations, whom he had so miracu-

lously driven out before them. For about three hundred years, that is, until the days of Samuel, and the establishment of a king among them, their whole history is made up of little else than a sort of contention between God and them; they sinning and repenting, and God chastising and relieving them, frequently in a manner so miraculous, that we cannot help equally wondering at his goodness, and their obstinate wickedness. I need not enter upon the particulars, which you see recorded in the book of their Judges, and in the beginning of the first book of Samuel.

Our wonder is yet farther increased, at their having, to this day, so religiously preserved this record, with many others, which so deeply blacken their own characters. But here common sense must interpose to prove to us, that no people, less ready to revolt from the truth, no people, less obstinate in a fondness for the grossest errors in religious matters, and for all the sins which flow from those errors, could have brought about so many, and so convincing proofs for the support of our faith in the great plan of Providence, whereby to prepare for, and whereon to build, the gospel of our Redeemer. Had they easily received, and all along strictly adhered to, their religion, we might, at this day, have doubted, whether priestcraft and politics had not been contrivers and managers of that plan. It is probable, therefore, that the Israelites were chosen, not only because they were the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but because they were a most perverse and stiff-necked people, who have laboured and suffered for the conversion of mankind, as well by their infidelity and apostacy, as by the love of truth and virtue in a few among them. Did not Christ afterward, for a like reason, choose Judas into the number of his apostles? Or did he not always perfectly 'know what was in man?' in every particular man? It is just so the Jews serve the cause of Christ Jesus to this day, and will serve it yet more signally at their approaching return to the plain sense of those prophecies, for the purity of which, as still enemies to Christ, they are every where the best vouchers.

But to proceed, their first king was but half a believer, and half a servant to God; yet under him the prophet Samuel made a considerable progress in bringing back these

untoward mortals to the service of the only true God, and such a dependence on his power, providence, and promises, as they were capable of. They soon tasted the happy effects of this return, in a deliverance out of a miserable subjection to their Philistine enemies, begun under their first king, and soon after completed in the reign of their second.

This was David, a man, notwithstanding two most horrible actions, 'after God's own heart.' The wise and good Being does not judge of any man by one or two, the best or worst actions, but by the general tenor of his life. In the eyes of men one very excellent deed shall raise the doer to the highest pitch of glory; or one very scandalous, plunge him to the sink of infamy. In our weak apprehension the first can never err, nor the second ever do good. Yet every man is capable of either. In this light his all-knowing Maker considers him, forgives the evil, if he repents, and blesses him for the good, if he does not take the merit of it to himself, but gives God the glory. David did both. He repented and bewailed his crimes from the depths of his soul, but never once calls on mankind to applaud him for his tenderness and generosity to Saul, that enemy who sought his life, and could not be cured of his malice even by a repetition of this generosity. The Lord, looking on the better part of David, raised him 'from feeding sheep, to feed his people;' and never did man better acquit himself of so high a trust. Inspired by God, he inspired his countrymen and subjects with that faith in God, and love of his service, to which no miracles had ever brought them. By his wisdom and valour he led them to victory every where; and by his piety, to a happy conquest over themselves. Under him they became quite another people. Before Christ, no man ever so served the cause of God and true religion as David did. God punished him for his sins, and loved him for his goodness. As bishop Hall hath observed, God suffered him to fall, that no man may presume; and enabled him to rise again, that no man may despair. David hath never been railed at by infidels (and no other do it) for his sins, though they are always made the plausible pretence, but for his piety and love of religion. No two characters of antiquity, fairly considered, deserve more to be admired than those of David and St. Paul, and yet each of them had innocent blood on

his head ; blood, however, washed off by the blood of Christ. David, after his repentance, cries out, ' I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God. Thy sacrifices are a broken spirit!' And Paul, after his, calls himself ' the chief of sinners.' Whosoever so repents, becomes ' the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, through faith in his atoning blood.' That David was blessed with this faith, as well as with that repentance, is evident in not a few of his Psalms, where he bewails his sins, and prophesies of Christ in very plain and strong terms, particularly in the second, sixteenth, twenty-second, and the forty-fifth Psalms, which it will be easy for the reader to consult. This great event David could not, of himself, foresee a thousand years before ; and therefore common sense must perceive, that his predictions were the effect of Divine inspiration, and a probable proof that he was not unacceptable to God.

During the long reign of his son and successor, Solomon, we have no reason to think the Israelites departed from the worship of the true God, until Solomon himself, who had been the wisest of men, was seduced by his pride (for who so fond of pomp and splendour) and by a love of pleasure, into idolatry ; in other words, into the lowest degree of folly, to say nothing of his wickedness, so as to be found on his knees adoring a stick or stone. If his father could be guilty of adultery and murder, and he of such crying stupidity and wickedness, the common sense of us all must rouse us to humility, fear, and watchfulness. Let us therefore ' watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation;' for, if we once enter, none but God can tell, how creatures so much worse than David, and so much inferior in wisdom to Solomon, shall escape from snares, already laid by the enemy of our souls in our fleshly lusts, in our pride, our slavery to pleasure, and our enfeebled understandings.

Quickly after the death of Solomon, the kingdom was divided into two ; Judah and Benjamin continuing subject to his son, and the other ten tribes revolting to Jeroboam. This bad man, to prevent his people from going to worship God in the temple at Jerusalem, still in the possession of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, and by that means reconciling themselves to the family of David, set up two golden

calves at Dan and Bethel; to the worship of which he soon brought the far greater number of his ill-disposed subjects. But such as would not submit to this sort of idolatry, nor forsake their God, fled in crowds from his dominions to those of Rehoboam, whereby the kingdom of Judah was greatly strengthened.

From this time to the captivity, first of the ten tribes under Shalmoneser king of Assyria, and again, of Judah and Benjamin under Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the kingdom of Israel, an inconsiderable number excepted, sunk still deeper and deeper into idolatry, and wickedness of every kind; while that of Judah, not so corrupted, did little better than compliment their kings with their faith, worshipping the true God, but not always in a proper manner, under a good and religious king, and generally forsaking him under a king of an opposite character; and, at length, became almost wholly idolaters.

During this time of about three hundred and sixty years, the Lord was pleased to send a number of prophets into both these kingdoms, who cried aloud against their idolatry and other sins, threatening them with wrath and vengeance from the hand of God, unless they returned to his service and their duty. Small was the number of those who listened, though frequent miracles, afflictions, and deliverances, were added to give force to the warning, in comparison of the deaf and hardened. Among these prophets some left nothing in writing, but nine or ten did, and five or six more, during the seventy years of captivity in Babylon, and after the return of the Jews from thence to their own country. Of these scarcely one is silent concerning the Redeemer. With the threatenings just mentioned, they seldom fail to refresh the faith, and comfort the spirits of the few believers and good men, not yet estranged from God, and the true religion. To these they promised both a suffering and conquering Saviour in the same person. Isaiah especially speaks of him so often, and so clearly, particularly of his sufferings and death, chap. liii. and of the end for which he was to suffer, that not one of the four evangelists, who wrote the life of Christ, after he left the world, is more express, or speaks of him with stronger feelings. Daniel fixes the time of his coming, insomuch that Rabbi Nehemiah, a learned

Jew, who taught just fifty years before the birth of Christ, assured his students, that Christ, or the Messiah, which signifies the same thing, must certainly come at the end of those years. Nay, Zechariah, or Jeremiah (for it may be either), predicts the very number of silver pieces for which Christ should be sold by the traitor. It would be endless to quote all the prophecies in the Old Testament, which speak of, and foretell the birth, the life, the preachings, the sufferings, the miracles, the divinity of our great Redeemer. Of these prophets not a few died martyrs to Christ before he was born, and are so called by St. Stephen, who, speaking to the unbelieving Jews, saith, Acts vii. 'Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers.' It would also be needless in this work, which, if it shall not prevail on you to search the Scriptures for such inestimable jewels, comes to nothing, and must prove, that I am not appealing to men of common sense. Two or three observations, however, made here, may not be useless to a rational man, who hath favoured me, or rather himself, with his company and attention, so far.

In the first place, these prophecies, as preserved pure and uncorrupted by the Jews, which they all affirm, at the same time that they bear so full a testimony for our blessed Saviour, bear equal witness to the blindness and obstinacy of those Jews in rejecting him and his religion. In this they shew themselves to be but the same stupid and backsliding people they were in the days of their judges, and latter kings; and yet, in spite of themselves, become the instruments of Providence to testify, in the character of enemies to our religion, the truth and divinity of that religion.

In the next place, as many of the prophecies foretell the sufferings of Christ, and not fewer his triumphs, the Jews, fixing their ambitious eyes on the latter only, expected to be made lords of this world by the Messiah, and therefore as they beheld him only in his poverty, and heard him declare, 'his kingdom was not of this world,' they treated his

miracles and doctrines, as their forefathers did those of Moses and the prophets, and his person, with contempt. Yet, after all his sufferings, and his death at last, he did triumph first over them in the destruction of their nation, and over his other enemies and persecutors, as we have since seen. They knew not how to conceive the possibility of the lowest humility and distress with the noblest victories, and the highest glory, concurring in one and the same Messiah, and therefore took it into their heads, without the smallest degree of prophetical authority for so doing, that two Messiahs, one a suffering, and another a conquering Messiah, were to be expected. They had no notion that the same Messiah might suffer in a bodily or worldly sense, and triumph in a spiritual, or at different times. Much less did they imagine, that his very sufferings and death could be the triumph predicted, which in reality they were, for 'by his death he overcame death,' and 'destroyed him that had the power of death,' and 'having destroyed principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them.' You will probably be surprised when I tell you, that, to this day, the Jews allow, he wrought the miracles recorded by his evangelists, but fly to the old miserable shift of their obstinate forefathers, who saw them wrought, but said, he wrought them by the power of the devil; although in so doing they complimented the devil with the attributes of infinite goodness and power, for who of less goodness would do and suffer so much to establish a scheme of universal piety and virtue? Or who of less power could raise the dead, and raise himself to life after he had been dead?

In the third place, of all nations, it is very remarkable, that the Israelites, or the Jews were most frequently carried into captivity. Their repeated revolts from God were thus punished by his providence for this reason, I firmly believe, because, when or wherever they were thus carried by their conquerors, they soon repented of their wickedness in departing from the service of their God, soon talked to their masters of the wonders their God had wrought for them, and of their innumerable revolts, as the causes of their subjection and misery. This and their almost unhoped-for recovery of their liberty and country, could hardly fail to

spread some knowledge of the true God, and some expectation of a redeemer, among the neighbouring nations, with whom they had to do. In the Old Testament we now and then hear them twitted with this revolt by their enemies, and an expectation founded thereon of a people easily subdued, under the circumstance of infidelity to their God. Under the Babylonian captivity, in particular, God so favoured them by the wisdom given to Daniel, and by the miracles wrought for him, and for the three Jewish children, as they are called, that their liberty and return to their country were decreed by Cyrus and Artaxerxes. These things could hardly have happened without leaving some impression on the minds of their late masters in favour of that God, who could do so much, in preference to their own gods, who could do just nothing at all; and probably in favour of the redeemer, expected, and possibly mentioned by Daniel, who, while at Babylon, had by a particular revelation been made acquainted with the time of his coming, connected with, and to be computed from a certain future event in their history.

In the fourth place, not less remarkable is the history of this singular people, descended from Abraham, in regard to the great empires with which they had to do. Ambition and conquest raised the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Macedonian, and Roman empires to the absolute dominion of all the countries wherewith the Israelites or Jews had any concern, and of far distant countries, with which they had none, and of which they had not then the smallest knowledge. All this, I am convinced, and you, if you consider it, will be convinced, was permitted and disposed by the providence of God to unite the nations, hitherto separated in customs and language, that when his Son should arrive in this fulness of time, his religion might find a more open and easy passage among mankind, which it actually did. Thus Shalmoneser, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, Lucullus, Pompey, and Cæsar, without knowing it, fought for Christ; and thus Isaiah, after describing the sufferings of Christ, foretold, that he should 'divide the spoil with the strong.' Can we now believe, that this unworthy, despicable people, the Jews, do yet survive all the great and powerful empires under which they groaned, for no provi-

dential purpose? Common sense cannot so much as suppose it. They still breathe the same fury against Christ and his religion, that possessed them when they persecuted both; but at the same time, among all mankind, there are none who more effectually serve him, or promote the cause of his religion. Since the death of Jacob to this hour, they have not been more distinguished from other nations by their living apart from the rest of mankind, than by their irreligious disposition. When they crucified the Son of God, and Saviour of men, they prayed, 'his blood might fall upon their heads, and the heads of their children;' and hath it not, after a most frightful destruction of their temple, city, and nation, in their dispersion through all nations, and a captivity of more than seventeen hundred years, under circumstances of universal contempt and abhorrence?

Lastly, if a number of men, interested in some particular affair, are got together, as in a parliament or council, they may possibly agree on some scheme for the management of that affair, and it is as likely they will not. But howsoever this may be, common sense must call it impossible for men, living in countries considerably remote from each other, and at the distance in point of time, of more than three thousand years, to combine for the promotion of any one expedient in acting or writing; especially still, if not a few of them, had they been acquainted with that expedient, must have done all they could to defeat it. It may here be objected, that men, acquainted with it, and wishing well to its prosperity, might have successively endeavoured to promote it. True, but not, if they were ignorant both of it, and its end; much less if they were enemies to that end. Such exactly hath been the case of the means and expedients made use of to bring about our happy redemption. These means were set on foot immediately after the fall, by a promise to the first man in words of double interpretation, that his seducer might not see into their purport. It was worded in general terms also, when renewed to Abraham and Moses. If from this dawn, it rose to still clearer and clearer lights in David, and onward to Malachi through all the prophets, the death of the Redeemer, and his victorious successes, were always so intermixed as to leave enough for the completion to clear up. Some very few of the Hebrews, to whom these pro-

phecies were intrusted, saw into the grand design. The devil and the rest did not. That he did not, is, I think, intelligible from the confession of such evil spirits as Christ dispossessed, whom he would not suffer to proceed in that confession, lest it should discredit his mission, and from the change of the devil's measures, who failing in this attempt, still made use of by the Scribes and Pharisees, had recourse to persecution and murder, wherein he was aided by Judas, Caiaphas, Pilate, Jews, and Romans, all ignorantly acting on motives of infernal malice, but at the same time promoting the great atonement. Behold how good and bad men, friends, enemies, and devils, were all employed in offering up the great sacrifice and atonement for the sins of mankind. What then produced the uniformity of this mysterious work, so long pursued, and by so many different actors? It must have been one mind, and that infinitely the wisest and best of all minds.

In this chain of references to Moses and the prophets, I have, with due humility, followed the example of Christ, who, in his walk to 'Emmaus, expounded to two of his disciples, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, in all the Scriptures,' then in being, 'the things concerning himself.' In doing this, I trust I have not departed from his method, when I so often endeavoured to turn your eyes on the neighbouring nations, wherewith the Israelites were concerned, since, to me at least, it was impossible to render the prophecies, and historical transactions, recorded in those Scriptures, intelligible to you, without pointing to you the light of divine revelation, reflected, though dimly, from those adjacent nations, as that of a candle from the walls of a room, in which it is placed. To this end, I but repeat the very words of Christ, when I say to you, 'Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.' It hath been my endeavour to shew you, what you may see with your own eyes, that the Scriptures of the Old Testament did continually, for near four thousand years, bear testimony to him, and do still in the most full and ample manner, as do now likewise those of the New.

The Jews, from their return out of Babylonia to their own country, never departed from the worship of the true God, nor his law; but so far from the latter only, as their learned

men and rabbis taught them to despise the spirit of that law, and to prefer the interpretations and traditions of themselves, those rabbis, to an infinitely purer and better law, whereof the Mosaic was but the shadow.

As all the transactions above referred to, are contained in the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, and as it will be necessary for me to refer you hereafter, for the greater part of what I am to say, to those of the New, we must give a little time to establish the credit of those books as the real word of God himself. Not that I have the smallest distrust of your faith in these sacred books, as coming to you from the fountain of truth, and of every word and doctrine contained in them, as necessary to your virtue and happiness in both worlds; but because I would still farther strengthen that faith in you, and enliven it to a still warmer and closer attention to the means of your own salvation, contained in them. That close attention, that constant perusal, that absolute submission to God, speaking to you in these books, which become you as men of common sense, I am sensible is wanting in you. Somewhat else, I fear, is wanting, namely, 'the armour of God,' to defend you against the assaults of your spiritual enemies, ever on the watch to enfeeble your faith, and throw you off your guard. There only is that armour to be found, that 'shield of faith,' that 'sword of the Spirit,' without which you can never be safe against either your own natural corruptions, or the cunning deceivers, that lie in wait to destroy you.

As to the Old Testament, there might be some small appearance of room to suspect that the Jews had forged the books, which make up that volume, if any thing like a reason or design for their so doing could be so much as guessed at; or if those books did not every where record their own infamy before, Neh. ix. &c.; and their own cruelty and blindness since, the coming of Christ. What witness is more credible, than he who knowingly bears witness against himself? Or supposing he does not know or believe, he does this, is not his testimony of great weight, when the truth is brought out of him by a cross examination, the tendency of which he does not see into, till it is too late to draw back? It is true, the later Jews, eight or nine hundred years after Christ, have endeavoured to corrupt some passages of the Old Testament in the original Hebrew, a language then and

now imperfectly understood; but have been shamefully exposed by learned Christians, rather better acquainted than themselves with that language, and by the ancient translations, one made by seventy-two rabbis of their own, two hundred and seventy years before the birth of Christ, into Greek, and quoted almost always by Christ, and the writers of the New Testament; and by others, about his time, into that, and other languages, as Christianity spread itself among the Syrians, Arabians, and Romans, most of which we have at this day. But after all the Jews did, or attempted to do, the book stands good, and vouches for Christ, and against his enemies, in a manner so convincing, that St. Peter urges its prophecies of Christ as stronger evidences for him, than even his miracles, 2 Peter i. 19; an argument applicable to the Jews only, but no way applicable, or of any force, had it not been a given point by Jews as well as Christians, that the prophecies of the Old Testament were still preserved in their purity, when it was used. It was certainly as much in the power of God, and as worthy of his providence, to preserve the Scriptures in all necessary purity, as it was to carry on, for three or four thousand years, the great scheme of redemption, whereof I have been endeavouring to make you sensible. And yet that great and blessed scheme must have been miserably maimed and impaired, if the Scriptures had been so impaired, or totally lost; had they been, I mean, lost to all the generations of men that have followed, or shall follow the writings of that book, which alone contains a record of the scheme itself, and of all the important facts and instructions employed in it, and conveyed by it. It would, I think, have been more reconcileable with the wisdom and goodness of God to have suffered the whole world to perish, than to have suffered the means of our redemption, in the loss of these prophecies, to have perished. Are not the souls of mankind of more value in the sight of God, than all the rest of a world, which he undoubtedly created for the mere temporary accommodation of men? As sure as our souls are intended for eternity, this reasoning is just. All the books we have, written by mere men of the highest talents among the ancients are well preserved, and why not the book of God, compared with which, all other books are trifling, and to a sound judgment, appear as insignificant, as useless, and as foolish, as the prattling of little children?

What hath here been said, may and must be said with double force in favour of the Scriptures contained in the New Testament, their usefulness, and purity ; as in them the completion of divine revelation, and of the work of our redemption, can be easily supported with much greater strength, and so likewise as to reflect at the same time, a very large addition of light on the uncorruptedness of the Old Testament. There is indeed such a connexion between them, that they must stand or fall together, as both together form the book of God : they will stand in spite of men and devils, till the world and time shall be no more. These Scriptures were drawn up and published by men who proved their inspiration by the miracles they wrought, and at a time when thousands were alive to refute, or attest, the transactions therein related, and the doctrines there said to have been delivered, eye or ear-witnesses to both. We have more than sufficient reason to be assured, that none of these thousands made the least objection to the truth of any thing set forth in the Scriptures I am speaking of; but, on the contrary, were ready to die, and many of them did die, for that truth. Now, it cannot be so much as suspected, that men of common sense should so vouch for the truth and importance of writings, which nevertheless they were capable of corrupting, or of suffering others to corrupt ; I say suffering, because they had it absolutely in their power to prevent or stifle every attempt of that kind, had it been made. They had the originals, or carefully-compared copies, of those Scriptures in their hands, and had great part of them by rote ; insomuch, that had a new copy been any where produced, with a material error or change, it must have been instantly exposed, and the copyist, on whose care and fidelity his bread depended, must have suffered in his character and business. We know, that before printing was invented, copying was a trade, whereby many thousands earned their livelihood, and that of their families. The originals of the evangelists and apostles were preserved for many hundred of years, in their own hand-writings, as the most sacred of all trusts; and when any dispute or suspicion arose, as many did, about a passage of some consequence in a copy, recourse was immediately had to these originals, and the suspected passage immediately confirmed, or condemned and corrected. That

written originals on parchment could be kept a much longer time than I have mentioned, is plain, for we have still a considerable number, above a thousand years old. As soon, however, as Christianity spread, as it did in the very first age after Christ, among many nations of different languages, these Scriptures were closely and faithfully translated into those languages. And now the corrupting of those Scriptures became still more difficult, until, in process of time, as copies, and translations, and as copies of translations, increased to an inconceivable number, material corruptions, humanly speaking, became impossible. I repeat the word, material, because small errors of the pen, as now of the press, were unavoidable, involuntary, and wholly immaterial.

There was, however, somewhat else, which, could I be allowed the expression, did, in a very high degree, add to this impossibility. In the very time of the apostles several heresies and schisms arose in the church, and increased downward through several ages. But all these, as well as the Christians of sounder principles, had constant recourse, by different ways of interpreting, to these very Scriptures, to support their various opinions, and were warmly, nay, sometimes furiously, enraged at each other. Now was the time, when corruptions, adding, or omitting, a text might have served the purpose of a party; and parties there were then, as there are now, whose consciences would have permitted them to practise any or all the three sorts of deceit mentioned. But common sense makes it evident, that none of them could pass or gain credit. Nobody was fool enough to corrupt, add, or omit, a text, which had nothing to do with his particular opinion; and had he been fool enough to practise on a text that had, every original, every translation, every copy but his own, must have exposed and condemned his attempt, his opinion, his party; and all the thousands, who had charged their memories with the passage, a passage too affecting the faith or morals of all Christians, would have cried aloud against, not only the impious corruptor himself, but the villany of his whole party, as unable to support its credit, but by arts, fit only for the father of lies to employ. Such tricks were therefore either never attempted, or were under an absolute impossibility of suc-

ceeding. Can we suppose, the fathers, the saints, the martyrs, were always asleep, and inattentive to the written word of God, by which they lived, for which they died? Or, even supposing this, is it possible to believe, that the providence of God, which neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, should have slept over those books, both of the Old and New Testament, which it cost so much to perfect; which contain all the prophecies, miracles, with the history and religion of his Son; which set forth to us all that we are to believe or do in order to our salvation; which every where prove themselves, by their holiness and excellence, and by their admirable fitness to supply the most important wants of mankind, to be the works of God himself? Common sense must disclaim a belief like this, which hath proved too hard for the swallow of devils. Now, my dearly beloved in Christ Jesus, let us cast anchor here; let us stand fast on the rock of our salvation; let us lay these heavenly books before us, and to their plain infallible test bring every thing we think, speak, or do.

Having brought this important subject, as near as I could, to your apprehension (and nearer it need not be brought to that of the most learned) I may now cry out as Isaiah did, 'Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken.' To that voice 'which shakes the heavens and the earth,' who will not listen? That voice which hath 'gone out into all lands, and to the ends of the earth?' That voice, which 'day uttereth unto day, and night unto night,' in the natural world, every where carrying with it instruction, but raising itself in the word of God to a still louder and clearer tone, and directing itself more immediately to your understanding and wants? If you wish the Lord should hearken to your voice, when you cry unto him, then hearken you to the voice of his word. If you do, his glory and your happiness, will be the infallible effects. If you do not, he himself will say, 'I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.' You will sink yourselves in his sight to a lower degree of stupidity than that of the beasts that perish, and he will say of you, 'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but my people do not know, my people do not consider.'

Carefully observe now, that the whole history of the

world, so far as it is worth your reading, from the fall of man, down to the accomplishment of your redemption in Christ Jesus, and of your sanctification by the Holy Spirit, is nothing else, but the history of God's providential dealing with mankind, in order to this accomplishment, whereof the whole is laid before you in the book of God. If you attentively read this glorious book along the thread wherewith I have supplied you, your common sense will clearly perceive the truth of every particular in this my appeal to it. You will be most thoroughly convinced, that this book, in its wisdom, its spirit, in its power, and its compassion for your wants, is as much superior to all other books, as God is to man. You will perceive therein collected for your use all the delicious and wholesome fruits of the first four thousand and fifty years of the moral world. In this book you hear God speaking to you the words of eternal life, you see him bursting through the works of his own creation, and trampling on the very laws of nature, as he rushes forth to save you. In this you hear him prophesying, preaching, promising; and in this you see him, as a man, dying for you. This very book is his last will and testament, whereby he bequeaths to you a crown and kingdom, in glory exceeding those of ten thousand worlds. It is true, your title to this legacy is disputed by three very artful and eloquent lawyers, the devil, the world, and the flesh. But then in the Testament itself you clearly see on what terms to found your claim, and how to make it good at the bar of God, in spite of all their allegations, which you may easily refute by Christ your advocate, if you can plead the express words of the Testament, and shew that your title comes within their meaning. Hold this Testament fast to your hearts, for it was purchased with the blood of God, and contains your all. Part with life sooner than with this. Trouble not yourselves with the cavils and refinements of learned men on the subject of religion, or on the meaning of any passages in these sacred writings. All you want from it, is sufficiently plain. Only take care that your common sense alone is allowed to be your interpreter. As to the depth and darkness of a few passages, as God did not intend them for you, the unlearned, leave them as so many stumbling blocks in the way of pride and the devil, to be mangled, and then

quoted by them against Christ and his religion. If at any time your faith or virtue should at all stagger at their forced interpretations, consider whether they concern your salvation; and if they do not, banish them with contempt from your thoughts; but if they do, fly to prayer, and the book of God. Content yourselves with the plain open sense of such passages as you cannot mistake, and such as direct you in the safe path of life. Read, and be happy. If you can but see, hear, or think, you must be a Christian, must be saved. That no more is necessary to your being a Christian, will be evident by your taking this matter in another light. All sober people rightly take him for an errant fool or madman, who denies there is a God, or that the world was made by wisdom and power, or by any thing else than mere chance. You must take him to be equally mad, who denies, that God could speak to man, or make it evident, that he spoke to him. Nor is he less mad, who says that God could not prove, he empowered an angel, or man to speak to us, although he had enabled that angel or man to work miracles for our conviction; that is, to do such things as are impossible to be done but by the power of God. And farther, if any one is thoroughly convinced, that God hath spoken the holy Scriptures to all men, and fully proved, that he did so, by repeated miracles accompanying the delivery of those Scriptures, whosoever, so convinced, does not firmly believe those Scriptures, or does not understand them in their plain and open sense, cannot, by any other means so fully prove himself to be stark mad. Again, is he not unquestionably mad, who confessing that God made the world by wisdom, power, and goodness, and placed man at the head of it; nevertheless doubts, whether God always willed the virtue and happiness of man; or did, at any time, use such means as were necessary, without forcing the freedom of man, to bring him back to virtue, the only way to human happiness? Or can any man, in his senses, if he reads or hears the Book of God read by another, doubt whether that Divine book contains the most true and powerful method of converting a sinner and saving his soul? It is not more sure that there is a God, than it is that he is the author of all good, and the preserver of order in all his works, insomuch that every thing in this world, proceeds as

he hath appointed, excepting man, the only free agent here. Your common sense cannot help pronouncing him an outrageous madman, who coupling a lion and a lioness together, declares, they have as good a chance to generate a lamb as any thing else. You will not stop a moment to say the same thing of another, who sows his field with thistle-seed, and tells you, it may as well chance to produce a crop of wheat as of thistles. And can you suppose it less reasonable that God should care for man, than for brutes or plants? If he preserves order in the lower parts of his creation, shall he not preserve, or restore it in the higher? God hath so ordered the nature of man, that he is at liberty to be good or wicked. If then in consequence of this liberty, man should become wicked and miserable, is it not reasonable to believe, that his gracious Maker should, in mercy, use the proper means of his retrieval? Your common sense strongly maintains, it is; and nothing but downright madness can doubt of it. Now nothing hath ever been known to mankind, which can at all effect this retrieval, but the contents of God's Book. I therefore say again, read, meditate, be virtuous. Read and be happy. If you say you have common sense, do not put it in the power of reasonable beings to say with truth, that you are mad. This appeal requires nothing of you but to distinguish yourselves from the inhabitants of Bedlam. If any one of you were to be publicly hanged for some great crime, unless he should read, or hear another read, the king's reprieve, must he not have totally lost his senses, in case he should refuse to do either? In the Book of God he sends you a most gracious reprieve from the most shameful and miserable of all deaths, from eternal death; and will you neither read nor hear it read? The 'Scriptures are able to make you wise unto salvation.' What then must be said of your understanding, 'if you neglect so great salvation?' To common sense in the reader of these Divine Writings, and to that alone, I mean hereafter solely to appeal.

But whereas you can read them only in a translation from the Greek, the language wherein they were originally written (for Christ himself and the Holy Ghost have given the full force of originality to the Greek translation of the Old Testament) it is requisite I should say somewhat to you

on those translations before I proceed farther with that appeal. The holy Scriptures were intended chiefly for your use, in every country, and throughout all ages of the world, if ' in the seed of Abraham all nations of the earth were intended to be blessed.' Translations therefore of these Divine Writings, wherein that blessing in Christ, the seed of Abraham, and in his holy religion, is offered to you, were intended to be made into all vulgar languages; and that they might be safely made without any loss of sense and power, they were originally written in terms of the greatest simplicity and plainness, so as that the sense can be every where preserved, in all its beauty and force, by putting word for word in every living or vulgar language. Accordingly, all the translations of these sacred books have been scrupulously turned after this manner, for the benefit of every Christian country; excepting one only among many Latin translations, wherein the translator hath aimed at elegance, and hath therefore been universally condemned, even by those of his own communion. The other translations have been made by men of reputed piety and learning. Be this however as it may, no man, who set himself to this work, durst do more than poorly nibble, here and there, at interpretations favourable to his own sect. The fear of God prevented his taking many liberties which he wished to take. His dread of censure from all the learned world, in case he should have shewn a considerable degree of partiality, kept him still within closer bounds, and the good God, ever watchful for the truth of his own word, and the faith and salvation of his own people, stood over him, and in some degree guided or restrained his pen as he judged fitting. Here every thing I have just now said in regard to purity in the copies of Holy Writ, is almost as applicable in regard to its translations, so applicable indeed, that nothing, wherein faith or virtue is materially concerned, is kept out of sight in any translation; and that the sound Christian is able fully to refute the most artful heretic or schismatic by what he calls his own Bible, that is, by the translation in use among his own party. It is true, that all translations are the works of men only, and perhaps none of them wholly free from faults; yet there is not omitted in any one of them a single truth necessary to the salvation of the reader, nor a single

fallacy inserted that can endanger the soul of him who compares the suspected passage with other places even of the same translation. If therefore you read only to be saved (and I know not for what other purpose you or I should read), you may most safely confide in that which God, in his infinite goodness, hath blessed you with in your mother tongue. I speak this as my judgment in the presence of God, and humbly think, I may safely go so far.

It is now time, having God's word in our hands, to draw somewhat nearer to the great Redeemer, Christ Jesus. In the great number of prophecies concerning Christ, delivered through Isaiah, that which foretells the coming and office of John Baptist is very remarkable: chap. xl. ver. 3—5. Here it is foretold, that on our Saviour's arrival in this world, and somewhat earlier than his entrance on his priestly function, the voice of one shall be heard, 'crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough shall be made plain, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.' Pursuant to this prophecy, an angel, Luke i. said to Zacharias the father of John, 'Thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son—who shall turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he shall go before the Lord God in the spirit of Elias—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.' This John being asked by the priests and Levites who he was, answered, 'I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias,' John i. Such was the mortified life and sanctity of this man, that the Jews crowded to him from Jerusalem, and all parts of Judea, confessing their sins to him, and receiving baptism from him in the river Jordan. To them he preached repentance, and to the Pharisees and Sadducees he said, 'Ye generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?' To our blessed Saviour he bore repeated witness, as to Christ, or the promised Messiah, saying, 'Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away sin, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.' The high reputation of this holy man, his application of the prophecies to Jesus, his

severe reproofs to the haughty rabbis or learned of that time, and his loud call to repentance, were admirably fitted to humble the pride of the doctors, and raise the spirit of common sense among the lower sort of people, which Isaiah figuratively expresses by sinking the mountains, and exalting the valleys; and by these means contributed to level the way for Christ and his religion throughout the world. Too high or too low an opinion of our own understandings, in regard to any branch of knowledge, especially the former, are great hinderances to the attainment of it. Vanity persuades us to think we know, when we know nothing; and too great diffidence in our own capacities is apt to sink us into a despair of knowing such things as we might otherwise easily become masters of. The former begets infidelity; and the latter, ignorance and superstition, while it makes us liable to be imposed upon by others.

Now, dearly beloved, taking the word of God for your guide, draw near to Christ himself. But before you can do this to the good purpose intended, your common sense must convince you, that you ought to know yourselves, and to know him you are going to for instruction and direction, that you may the better judge of your own wants, and his power to supply them. In order here to avoid mistakes, and form a competent judgment of both, I say again, let us set out with a few preparatory inquiries, and draw somewhat closer to these two most necessary articles of knowledge. Were it your wish to learn some trade, or how to cast up an account in figures, you must first be sensible, that you know neither of these arts, and that the person you apply to for the knowledge of either, is himself sufficiently acquainted with that knowledge you stand in need of. You cannot come to Christ without at least beginning to humble yourselves with some sense of your ignorance and vileness; cannot come to so lowly a master, to the world's eye in so abject a rank of life; if you are still wise in your own conceit, you can have nothing to do with him, nor will he have any thing to say to you. Again, you cannot come to Christ, if you are not, in some degree, tired of the disappointing lusts of the flesh, as well as mortified in regard to the pride of life. These two, pride and lust, are the leading sins of mankind. Pride cannot be kept up, nor the lust of pleasure

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supplied, without wealth. Wealth, sufficient for the cravings of these insatiable masters, is not to be had but by avarice, nor avarice to be glutted, but by oppression and fraud, by cruelty, iniquity, perjury of the most horrible kinds and degrees. If you come to Christ, at all sensible of these things, he will throw such light upon your understandings and hearts, as to raise an utter abhorrence of them, and an ardent love of his cross in preference to them; and great indeed must that light be, which can shine in upon minds considerably clouded by either or both these causes of utter darkness. These two, pride and lust, are the mortal disorders, under which you ought to groan, and whereof no physician but Christ can cure you. He himself appeals to that common sense he gave you, when he sent you into being, or rather, to that little share of it which pride and lust have left you, in these words, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear; Go and tell John, what you do hear and see,' appealing to his doctrines and miracles; 'Why of yourselves judge ye not what is right?' The whole manner and form of Christ's religion is an appeal to common sense, whereof he knows you possess so little, that he only calls upon you to hear that you may grow wise; to see, that you may believe; to judge in matters most plain and easy, that you may know how to be saved from sin and misery, and attain to everlasting happiness. The moment you begin to think of yourselves as he does, and find yourselves fools, you enter the road to wisdom. If you can but hear, see, and prefer good to evil, and heaven to hell, you must be his disciples. Pride and lust, the two teachers of unbelief, that mother and nurse of wickedness, employ all their arts and delusions to make you think you want no religious teacher, either God or man. Whether you do or not, you can never solidly judge, till you know somewhat of yourselves and of Christ. To aid you in forming that judgment, this appeal is made. Are you deaf? Are you blind? Have you not even a small degree of that sense for God, for religion, for your soul, which you possess in so large a measure for your body and your worldly affairs? Now, as to the knowledge of yourselves, give me leave to ask you, Do you not find you are both vain and ignorant creatures, vain of your own understandings, and ignorant, in this instance, of the thing to be un-

derstood? Do you yet know whether you are going upward through religious knowledge to happiness, or blindly downward, through wickedness to misery? Do you know how great is the strength of your corrupt affections and passions; of your inveterate habits; and of the power which the things of this world have over those affections, passions, and habits? Have you keenly considered what is the punishment of sin, and what the reward of righteousness? or how sin may be subdued in you, and how righteousness may be obtained? Do you know and consider that you have not a moment to live, unless the Disposer of life and death shall please to afford it you; and that, whether he will or not, he hath never told you? Do you rightly consider what your condition to all eternity shall be, in case he should now remove you from this world? Are you able, of yourselves, to believe, repent, and reform the corruptions of your nature, so as that the All-seeing God may behold in you a new and holy creature? If you cannot satisfy yourselves by your answers to the questions of this self-examination, what does common sense tell you must be done? Consult it fairly with both understanding and heart, and you will hear it crying aloud, Renounce yourselves; humble yourselves; abhor the fleshly pleasures that have polluted, and the worldly views that have misled your weak and improvident nature to the grievous offence of God, and mortal gratification of his and your own enemy. In doing this, in thus humbling, afflicting, and rousing yourselves, fly to Christ. You are now a fit disciple for this best of all masters, whose service is perfect freedom and happiness. But first know who he is, that is to redeem you, and who that Holy Spirit is, who is to create you anew, and sanctify you to a true and faithful service of God, and, which is the same thing, to your own eternal salvation. A most careful comparison of God's goodness with your own unworthiness and wickedness, pursued by deep meditations on both, often repeated, and long continued, and still set face to face in your hearts, is the only road to true repentance, and to a warm and lasting love of God. If you can by this method (and it is indeed the only true one) find the way to a thorough distrust of yourselves, with a lively and lasting love of God, the great work of his glory in your salvation will be happily accomplished. The

good Being never did, never will, destroy an humble soul that loves him. ‘ All things,’ whether health or sickness, riches or poverty, life or death, ‘ work together for good to him that loves God.’ Let this noble pursuit call in your common sense, guided by Christian faith, and aided by the Holy Spirit, from a trifling and ensnaring world, to this one great thing needful. If the hunters after wordly pomp, or fleshly pleasure, wherein they shew their sort of wisdom, should call you fools, enjoy the sneer, and know, that ‘ their wisdom is foolishness with God ;’ and your folly, as they call it, the only wisdom in his sight, who alone perfectly knows what true wisdom is. Christ is come to teach you the knowledge of himself and his religion, by his last will and testament.

Know, then, that this master is not only your Redeemer, but your God and Maker, John i. 1—3 ; that ‘ he is God over all, blessed for ever,’ Rom. ix. 5 ; and that the Holy Ghost ‘ is God, the eternal Spirit,’ Heb. ix. 14 ; that God, who ‘ dwelling in you,’ makes you, 1 Cor. iii. 36, ‘ and even your body,’ 1 Cor. vi. 19, ‘ his temple.’ Now there is ‘ but one only God,’ Exod. xx. 3. ‘ Thou shalt have no other gods before me’ (in my sight), Isa. xlv. 5. ‘ I am the Lord, and there is none else ; no God besides me. To us (Christians) there is but one God,’ 1 Cor. viii. 6, who is the Father, who is the Son, and who is the Holy Ghost ; into whose name we are baptized. There are no sentences in the world more easily understood, than these wherein the doctrine of of the Holy Trinity is contained. Your common sense is perfectly well acquainted with their meaning, and cannot but see the proof of each in the word of God ; and as you neither can, nor are required to believe any thing, but so far as you understand it, so your common sense forbids you to look, or attempt to look, farther into this, or any other knowable truth, than you are enabled by the faculties God hath given you. The highest angels of light cannot account for the mysterious part of this doctrine ; nor can you, for any one thing in yourself, or in the world around you ; cannot at all tell how you bend your finger or roll your eye. Hence you may learn to think with a due degree of lowliness concerning your understanding. If your short line of understanding cannot dive into things so very familiar, and seem-

ingly so shallow, how shall it fathom the incomprehensible, or rise up to reach the infinite? Christ says, 'Before Abraham was, I am,' John viii. 58. 'I and my Father are one being;' for so it is in the original, John x. 30. 'He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father,' John xiv. 9. 'I am the first and the last,' Rev. i. 11. Common sense tells you that he who says these things of himself, must be either the one only God, or a most impious impostor. Here is no medium. The Holy Ghost, Heb. ix. 14, calls himself 'the eternal Spirit;' for it is he who speaks every where throughout the Scriptures; and we know there is no being eternal, but the one only God. It is he that says, he 'makes your body his temple,' 1 Cor. vi. 19; and you know that nothing but the indwelling of God can make a temple. He himself tells you, that 'all these Scriptures are given by inspiration of God,' 2 Tim. iii. 16; and you know that the Holy Ghost is the inspirer; nay, that it was by him that Christ himself wrought all his miracles, Matt. xii. 28. 'This Spirit searcheth all things; yea the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God,' 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. He is 'our guide into all truth;' our guide to Christ, 'who is the way, the truth, and the life,' John xvi. 13; xiv. 6. We have our Christian faith by this Spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 9; 'that faith, without which it is impossible to please God,' Heb. ii. 11; through which 'we are saved by grace,' Eph. ii. 1. It is impossible common sense should believe that these things, and many others to the same purpose and effect, should have been said to us by Christ and the Holy Ghost, without intending that we should consider ourselves as redeemed, sanctified, and saved by them, which neither of them could ever possibly have done for us without being the true and only God, nor have said he did, if he did not, without being a gross deceiver. What greater curse is conceivable, than being without redemption and salvation? And did God give us being, and any thing less than God redeem or save us? No, God alone could do either; and therefore to God alone our gratitude and love are due. It is God alone, into whose name we are baptized. It is God alone who created us; God alone who redeems us; God alone who destroys in us the old sinful

man, and converts us into new and holy creatures. Were it possible for any but God, which it certainly is not, to do any one of these things for us, the jealous God, who 'giveth not his glory to another,' Isa. xlii. 8, would never have suffered himself to be robbed of it by another, much less have aided the robber in attempting it, with his own peculiar powers, demonstrated in so many prophecies and miracles. I repeat, and submit it to common sense, whether there is any middle way, whether you must not wholly reject the Scriptures, or firmly believe in the ever blessed and glorious Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity, so far as it is revealed to us, or we are bound to believe in it, is so far from containing in it any thing absurd or contradictory; so far from being unintelligible in itself, that there is no one thing ever conceived by mankind, more easily apprehended or understood. Nay, we have reason to believe it had never been revealed to us as an article of faith, but to explain to us somewhat, which, without it, we should never have been able to reconcile to our thoughts, and yet somewhat necessary to be cleared up to us; namely, how justice and mercy, both infinite in God, could have, at once, taken place in the redemption and sanctification of mankind, by the concurrence of the different offices to both. It should be enough for you to see that the Scriptures, that is, the word of God, do plainly and abundantly set forth the doctrine itself to you. If your common sense tells you any thing, it must be this, that you ought to receive this doctrine on God's word as a great and necessary truth. As to wresting the Scriptures to any other sense than the plain and common one wherein I have quoted them, it will be less impious to throw them wholly aside. These Scriptures are our safe and only guide in every article of faith, and every rule of practice. By them we are to 'prove all things' in regard to religion, to our hopes, fears, and whole government of our lives: by them we are 'to hold fast that which is right;' for by them alone we can know what is right in a religious sense. By them our heads are to be directed; by them our hearts are to be roused, alarmed, and warmed with the love of God, and the hatred of sin. All the history of the world, for the four first thousand years, is of little or no significance, but as it carries our eyes to Christ, and introduces, as it proves, to us the

glorious book of God, filled with providential interpositions, judgments, deliverances, prophecies, miracles, all pointing to the Creator, Redeemer, Comforter, and in them to the eternal life of its attentive, its humble, and mortified reader. As such, let us now read, mark, and learn who he is, and what he came to do for us. In this it is your business, and must be mine, to be as brief as the infinitely important matter will permit.

Christ, then, the eternal God, 'by whom, and for whom, all things were made, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; who was before all things, and by whom all things consist,' Col. i. 16, 17; moved by infinite pity for us, came down from the throne of glory, and from the hallelujahs of the heavenly host, and took on him 'the form of a servant,' Phil. ii. 7; that is, the soul and body of man; became a teacher to us, who 'sat in darkness and the shadow of death,' Job. iii. 3; and 'became obedient unto death, even the' shameful and most miserable 'death of the cross,' for us despicable wretches. He did not appear among us as a great earthly lord or king. No, he came as the son of a poor virgin; and in the eyes of ignorant and haughty men, as the reputed son of a carpenter; was born in a stable, and cradled in a manger. Neither was 'there any beauty in his face or person, that we should desire him,' Isa. liii. 2; for he was to teach women as well as men. All outward worldly shew and pomp, which he utterly despised, all carnal pleasure, which he abhorred, he came to teach us to despise and abhor; knowing, and teaching us to know, that pride, and the love of pleasure, were the original fountains of all our corruption and misery. If, therefore, most dearly beloved in the Lord Christ, you are not already ashamed of your pride, and tired of your vain and unsatisfactory pleasures, you cannot come to the humble God of your salvation to be taught; for, as his disciples, you must be carried forward to more than that shame, and that disgust; you must even die to sin, and to these sins of pride and fleshly pleasure more especially. For you Christ descended from all the glories of heaven, and denied himself those rivers of pleasure which flow from the right hand of his Father. You are required to come down only from that

poor inch of height, to which you may be raised above your ragged neighbour, and to disrelish the pleasures of a swine. But that you may thus fully humble yourselves, and mortify the deeds of your fleshly and corrupted nature, Christ and his Holy Spirit will enable you, for they come, not only to guide you as blind, but to help you as weak creatures. They will lead you in the way to life eternal, and lend you their almighty arms to lean on. Naaman, one of the proudest men in the world, came to the mean habitation of Elisha to be healed of his leprosy; was healed, and from a haughty idolater, became an humble worshipper of the true God. Will you, already knowing somewhat of Christ, the true God, do less for the leprosy of your souls, than he did for that of his body? Or is bodily health better worth seeking for than spiritual? Of common sense I ask these questions.

The office of Christ was twofold, to reform and to atone; first, to reform you from sin as far as was possible, without laying an absolute force on your will, and then by his death to atone for such sins as you had committed before your conversion, but repented sincerely of; and even to satisfy the justice of his Father for such sins, as through mere human infirmity, and the violence of your temptations, you might be guilty of after that conversion, in case of a deep repentance of them on your part. But it is only by a firm faith in the mercy of God the Father, in the merits of God the Son, and in the aid of God the Comforter, that you can hope for the benefit of that atonement. Faith is the spring of repentance, and of such 'good works as are mete for repentance.' It is therefore most true, that as the good Christian 'is kept by the power of God, through faith to salvation,' 1 Pet. i. 5; it is his business 'not to look at things that are seen' in this worthless world, but at the much better things of a future life, 'which are not seen,' 2 Cor. iv. 18; which he can never do, if he hath not, with his whole soul, received 'the evidence of things not seen,' Heb. xi. 1; namely, of Christ, his miracles, his death, his resurrection, and of a future judgment, with a heaven or hell, to follow it. In this place I earnestly call on your common sense to consider, that as the imputation of original sin in the first Adam goes down to all his posterity by the corruption of human nature, and its effect, actual sin; so the imputation of ori-

ginal righteousness in Christ, the second Adam, and of his atonement, must descend to all his children through faith, and that reformation of nature which he preaches, and its effect, an abstinence from sin, together with the performance of good works; for our faith is no otherwise to be perfected or 'proved but by our works,' James ii. 18. 22. Just so it is, that a good tree is known by its fruit. It is most true that, if you shall 'confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God hath raised him from the dead, ye shall be saved.' Faith is therefore the immediate principle and cause of salvation in and to the believer; but if it is not seconded in him by a good life, 'it is dead,' and only the same with the 'faith of devils,' who are forced to believe by irresistible evidence, but still continue in their former wickedness, and feel no other effect of their involuntary faith, 'but trembling and despair.'

Our blessed Redeemer, as soon as he took on him his priestly office, that is, about the thirtieth year of his life, began to preach his gospel, in other words, to publish the good tidings of salvation offered to all men, and in order to it to call all men 'to repentance' and newness of life, with such wisdom, authority, and power in speaking, as was never heard from the mouths of angels or men. He taught us to know, so far as man can know, the one only true God, who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and declared to us, that all who believe in this one only God, and are baptized into his name, 'shall be saved;' and 'whosoever shall not believe,' particularly in this form of baptism, 'shall be damned,' Matt. xxix. 19. Mark xvi. 16. He taught us to know God in his attribute of justice, satisfied for the repented sins of mankind, by the blood and death of him our sacrifice; and in his mercy, promised to us, if we believe and repent, for the sake of that sacrifice. In this we learn how justice and mercy, both infinite, are reconciled, and both take place in man, a mystery, unfathomable before, not only to man, but angels, 1 Pet. i. 10—12. 'He brought life and immortality to light by his gospel;' that is, into a full and clear light, which had been seen, before he revealed it, only in a kind of twilight. On this most important point of knowledge he founded our expectation of a judgment, to pass at the last day on all the thoughts, words, and actions

of mankind, with a heaven or hell immediately to succeed that judgment. Of this judgment, to be passed by himself, ('for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father,' John v. 22, 23.) he gives a full view, Matt. xxv.

As to the two great original sins, the fountains of all other sins, pride, and the love of pleasure, he prescribes a total mortification of both in commanding us to shut out the world from our thoughts, to 'deny ourselves,' and 'to take up our cross and follow him,' both as to his precepts and example. His precept in regard to pride is, 'that we should be meek and lowly like him.' His example, as to pride and pleasure, is amazingly striking. All the delights and glories of heaven belonged to him, yet he came into this miserable world, into one of its lowest conditions, renounced its pleasures, suffered poverty, contempt, and persecution, and the death of a slave. What Christian then can think of passing his days in pomp and pleasure? As to pride, it hath been the chief cause of all the quarrels between man and man, and of all the wars between nation and nation, and therefore is not to be admitted into a society of peace and love, such as the Christian. The proud man seldom believes what he hears, not always what he sees. He must therefore be a stranger to faith. How could he, in heaven, bear the shock of so many beings above him? Were it possible for pride and Christian faith to take place in the same mind, they could not, for a moment, subsist together. The one must quickly destroy the other. Self-sufficiency, both as to understanding and merit, is always the ruling principle of the proud. In this, like the devil from whom he hath his pride, he sets up for an equality with God. Eve, at the instigation of the devil, aimed at being as God. And as to the love of pleasure, the fruit was fair to her eye, and so she eat it, though God had forbidden it. Adam too so loved the woman, and had such pleasure with her, that he rebelled and eat. You see here how infidelity, or want of faith in God, began. Their disbelief in God, their reliance on the devil, rather than him, and their appetite of pleasure, have so gone down among their posterity, as to produce all manner of wickedness, and shut the minds of most men against

that faith, which prescribes humility and self-denial. Hence it is, that we are so much more apt to be taken with the things 'that are seen, than the things that are not seen,' and 'to be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.' Not all our other corrupt dispositions so harden our hearts towards God and our neighbour, as pride and self-preference. A man, addicted to these two horrible vices, would rather hear God blasphemed, and see his neighbour perish, than abate one tittle of the honour he claims, or of the pleasures he doats on. Our blessed Saviour, however, saith to us, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, thy mind, thy strength; and thy neighbour as thyself.' As to our neighbour, whom we see every day, if we love him, God, whom we have not seen, will take that love, as shewn to himself. For this and many other reasons, Christ prescribes not only forgiveness of injuries 'until seventy times seven,' but 'doing good for evil' as a necessary duty, and going still farther requires that 'we should love our enemies;' and makes love the distinguishing character of his disciples, summing up all the ten commandments in love to God and our neighbour. His whole religion indeed is light and love. He himself is our light, that great and glorious light, 'which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world,' by that reason, which, as our Creator, he bestowed on all men; and when this light had been almost blown out, he revives and enlarges it by that revelation, which he amply communicates to every man, who cometh into his church. That he too is love we know, 'for God is love;' and we know it by what it cost him to redeem us. As through natural corruption and sin there was enmity between God and us, he not 'bearing to look on iniquity,' nor man bearing to abstain from it, Christ by his 'cross having slain that enmity,' on the part of his Father, to slay it on ours, calls us by his gospel to 'repentance and newness of life;' and to secure the peace, made by the blood of his cross, founds on that blood a covenant between his Father and every particular Christian, entered into through him our only Mediator, when we are baptized. In this most solemn covenant the Father promiseth to unite us to his Son, to take us out of this wicked world into his own family, the church, and, adopting us for his own children, to provide for us, as such, an inheritance

of eternal joy and glory in heaven; in consideration of which high and happy privileges, the new Christian solemnly vows to God a total abhorrence of the devil, the world, and the flesh, with all the sins they tempt him to; a firm faith and trust in God as the spring of good works, and an humble and dutiful obedience to his commandments, as the only proof we can give of our gratitude and love. We must however consider, that we cannot possibly have this faith, but so far as we understand its articles, nor pay this obedience, but so far as we understand what God requires or forbids in each commandment. Both will be very easy to him, who in worldly matters clearly understands a much greater number of things, and much more difficult to be understood.

But whereas the Christian, thus admitted to a covenant of peace with his heavenly Father, is not able, of himself, to renounce, believe, and obey, as he hath vowed to do, the gracious Mediator hath appointed a second sacrament, whereby the poor frail Christian, having fallen into a breach of the covenant, may by faith and repentance renew that covenant, and wherein he may receive assistance from the Holy Spirit to keep his part of it in a better manner, during the remainder of his life. This is the supper of our Lord, in which every faithful and penitent communicant receives the food of everlasting life, to nourish and support his soul in all its conflicts with the enemies of God and its own salvation. In this holy ordinance the bread broken represents to the grateful heart the flesh of Christ torn; and the wine, his blood poured out on the cross for the redemption of all men. To keep up the knowledge of this redemption, to preserve the Scriptures pure and uncorrupted to all ages, to administer both sacraments, and to enliven in the minds of mankind a right sense of the aforesaid inestimable benefits, Christ hath united all his true and faithful followers into one society or church, whereof he himself is the head and governor, and charity, or the mind of Christ, is the soul, which gives life to all the real members of this holy and happy body. This is 'the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth,' 1 Tim. iii. 15, with which Christ hath promised to be present 'to the end of the world.' To feed this church as his flock, with the pure milk of the word, and under him, to tend and govern it by his mind and

Spirit, he hath personally, and by the Holy Ghost, appointed a ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons, who must, at the last day, severely account with him for the discharge of their respective offices; and the flock committed to each of them, for their attention or inattention to this his sacred ordinance; Matt. x. 40. Luke x. 16. The abuse of an ordinance in the men appointed to fulfil it, or the contempt of it in such as ought to be subject to it, especially if it is an ordinance of God, can neither annul it, or justify such as presume to make a material alteration in it.

It would ask more time, our lives indeed, to enlarge sufficiently on the wisdom and goodness of Christ in the gospel dispensation. Our understandings and hearts should widen themselves to the uttermost to receive the instructions, and feel the infinite mercy, afforded therein to creatures, so every way unworthy of them. This is, indeed, a very short and imperfect account of either the light or love he hath poured upon us. But what tongue of angels can sum up either?

Let me, in a few words try to bring them a little nearer to your common sense and hearts. You cannot help admiring his goodness and power in giving bodily light to the blind, and bodily agility to the lame. But was not your soul so blind, that it could not see its way to God and happiness? Was not your soul so lame, that it could not walk in that way, if it had seen it? And hath not Christ, by his gospel and Spirit, given your soul light to see that way, and strength to walk in it? Sure it is, at least he hath offered you both, and if you have not common sense enough most gratefully to embrace his offer, you must even grope and limp on in a by-way of your own. Thus, and infinitely more abundantly than thus, hath Christ imparted his wisdom to you. And that his wisdom might be acknowledged to be the very wisdom of God, and dispensed with sufficient authority and power, he fully proved his mission from God by the completion in him of all the prophecies, and by such gracious and astonishing miracles, every where openly wrought by him, as carried conviction with them to common sense in every mind, wherein total blindness had not taken place. Common sense said aloud, none, but the true Christ and Redeemer could thus fulfil the prophecies.

Common sense in a voice still louder, if possible, cried out, none but God can do these works, nor would God ever give this power to any being, but his own messengers, nor for any but the most excellent purposes. See, reader, with wonder and gratitude, how the laws of nature yield to the God of nature! How the dumb speak, the lame dance, the blind see, the sick are healed, the dead rise, and devils fly, at a single word of Christ! Behold him feeding five thousand men with five barley loaves and two fishes; and after they had eaten to their full satisfaction, look at the twelve baskets, filled with the fragments of these little loaves and fishes! See the God who made them, silencing the tempestuous winds, and smoothing the raging waves, with a word! Did he work these wonders by connivance, at set times or places? Or did not the multitude flock to him by thousands, here, there, or at any time, with their diseased relations or neighbours? Or did they ever come in vain? How good and great! All this time he was one of the poorest among mankind, and therefore held in the utmost contempt by the great ones of the world. With such his wisdom passed for madness, his miracles for the works of Belzebub, and his patience, meekness, and return of benefits for injuries, went all for nothing. Yet inconsiderable as they affected to think him, kings, priests, councils, governors, did not think it beneath them to persecute him with infernal malice, to suborn witnesses against him, to bribe one of his own disciples to betray him, to acquit and condemn him to death at a trial, and after scourging him, and loading him with spittle, to crown him with thorns, and crucify him between two thieves. Not satisfied with all this horrible cruelty, they stood about his cross deriding his last agonies, his only return to which was, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' They know not that I, whom they thus murder, am 'thy only-begotten and well-beloved Son;' know not that in this act of cruelty they are permitted by thee to become instrumental in the happy work of salvation to all men. Thus 'in his humiliation his judgment was taken away,' Acts viii. 33, and thus he died for you.

You cannot help feeling a degree of affliction at this dreadful recital. But know, that if you continue in unbelief or sin, you act this tragedy over again. The Spirit of God

tells you, Heb. vi. 6. 'You crucify Christ afresh, and put him to open shame again.' Can you so much as think of doing this? of doing this while you profess yourselves his disciples? Oh no, my brethren, leave this to his declared enemies, the infidels, the Pilates, the Caiaphases, the Judases, of the present times, of whom there are enough to do it; but do 'you love the Lord that bought you with his blood,' and be ready to sacrifice to him your corrupt affections, your passions, your pride, your lust of pleasure, your lives, if the cause of him and his religion requires it, as undoubtedly it does. Your own eternal happiness requires it too. Your lives are not more precious than his. If you are Christians, 'you are dead' to pride, to pleasure, to this world, 'and your lives are hid with Christ in God,' Col. iii. 3. But how can your lives be safely hid in him, if you put him to death, in whom your true and only life is hid and laid up with God, as in a treasury? If you murder him, you must, at the same time, murder yourselves, like wretches, not less foolish than ungrateful.

Our blessed Saviour had repeatedly foretold to believers and unbelievers, the death he died, and his rising the third day after to complete life. Aware of this, his enemies took care that he should be most certainly dead before his body was taken from the cross, whereof they had undoubted proof from one of their soldiers, who, suspecting even the apparent signs of death in his body and face, thrust a spear through his side into his very heart, and from the wound there issued 'both water and blood.' The bag therefore about the heart of every animal, wherein is contained a certain quantity of water, was pierced in the body of Christ, insomuch that this must have killed him, had he been most perfectly alive the instant before. From the cross his dead body was carried and buried in a new tomb, sunk down in a rock, and a very great stone rolled over the entrance. This not perfectly satisfying the suspicious priests, they prevailed with the governor Pilate to seal the stone to the rock, and set a guard of soldiers round it, to prevent his disciples from stealing away his body. These poor cowardly men, who had all forsaken him, and one of them forsworn him in his lifetime, were not likely persons to attempt so desperate a theft for a corpse, of which they could not have made the smallest use,

Yet notwithstanding all these precautions, and the utter impossibility supposed to be in the last, that a dead man should raise himself to life, he was really alive the third day, shewed himself to some women, then to his apostles, and after to crowds of his other disciples. This he did frequently for forty days after his resurrection, to men who knew him perfectly, and received every possible proof their senses were capable of, that he was perfectly alive. After this, they saw him go up bodily and visibly into heaven. The same men, lately so fearful of death, thus fully satisfied as to the reality of his resurrection, and animated with supernatural resolution by the wonderful descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, went about everywhere boldly preaching the resurrection of Christ, and patiently suffering all manner of barbarous cruelties, and death itself, for the reality and truth of this astonishing, but decisive fact. In this work, so contrary to all their worldly peace, safety, and interests, they were encouraged, not only by a sense of duty, but the miraculous powers conferred on them by the Holy Ghost, in preaching Christ to Jews and Gentiles, in languages they had never learned, and, though unlearned men, with a force of conviction unknown to mankind in the mouths of the most eminent philosophers and orators; insomuch, that in one day they made about three thousand converts to Christ.

All this now was, in the minds of those converts, the work of that common sense in you all, which I am here appealing to. They heard, they saw, they judged, and they believed; for these preachers, every where, and on every occasion, proved the truth of their testimony and doctrine by quoting the prophecies, by working miracles, not less convincing than those of their Divine Master, and by giving up their lives, not only with patience, but joy, for the saving truths they uttered. As now 'you cannot serve two masters,' especially in the most implacable state of opposition to each other, I appeal to your common sense, whether you should join yourselves to the cause of Christ and his apostles, or espouse the party of Judas, Caiaphas, and Pilate; the party of wickedness, misery, and the devil. You must do one, or the other. In this case there is no standing neuter, no dodging between the two, no compounding between God and the devil, for a life of pride and sensual pleasure,

on the one hand, and for an eternity of spiritual happiness, on the other. If you are saved at all, it must be ' by grace that you are saved through faith in Christ Jesus;' neither is there salvation in any other; ' for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.' As Christians, you can neither conquer your natural corruptions, nor perform works pleasing in the sight of God, but on the strength of your faith. Our Saviour gently reproved Thomas, who had seen all his miracles, and had wrought some himself, for doubting after hearing the testimony of the good women, and the other apostles, concerning his resurrection, until an opportunity should be given of trying the fact by his own senses, not excepting his very feeling. His gracious Master however on this occasion, shewing himself to Thomas as well as to the rest, called upon him to ' put his finger into the print of the nails in his hands,' and ' to put his hand into the wound, made in his side, that he might not continue an unbeliever any longer.' On this Thomas appears to have been convinced by the testimony of his eyes, without that of his feeling, and confesses Christ to be ' his Lord and his God.' That this man was fully satisfied with the reality of what he saw, without waiting for farther cause of conviction, appears from the words of Christ, which follow his confession. ' Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.' This blessing was certainly intended for you and me. We believe in the resurrection of our Lord, not merely on the report of others who had ocular proof of the fact, but also on the testimony of the Spirit, who had not descended upon Thomas before his doubts, but is ever with us as an inspirer of faith, for ' our faith standeth not in man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,' 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.

The promise of God, and the faith of a real Christian, are mutually and conditionally engaged to each other in the baptismal covenant. The land of promise, and the land of faith are either but one and the same land, or if two, so closely conjoined, that promise and faith are fed on the frontiers by a continual exchange of fruits. In all sorts of covenants and traffic with men, on performing your part, you trust to them for the performance of theirs; and why

not rather trust in God, who will never fail you, if on your part you are found faithful, than on men not always true to themselves, and still less frequently to their engagements with others? It must be confessed, that neither you nor I are able, of ourselves, to perform our part in this covenant, particularly to believe as we have vowed to do. Our merciful God knows this, and therefore sends us his Holy Spirit, that we may be enabled both to 'believe and to do according to his good pleasure,' and suitably to the expectations of infinite goodness from creatures so frail as we are.

Which Spirit and power are still with us to all the necessary purposes of faith, obedience, God's glory, and our salvation; but not in working miracles, or preaching a new gospel, or adding any thing to that which had been preached by Christ himself, and by the Holy Spirit, who still speaks to us in the Scriptures of the apostles and evangelists. How these witnesses of Christ went on, after they had received the Holy Ghost, writing, and preaching Christ risen from the dead, with innumerable other necessary gospel doctrines, to Jews and Gentiles, and every where 'confirming the same with signs and wonders;' how they 'rejoiced and glorified' in 'being thought worthy to suffer' all manner of afflictions and miseries for the name of our Redeemer; and how they prospered in making converts to Christ and his holy religion, sometimes by thousands at once, you read in their Acts, written by St. Luke, until Christ came with power, given to a Roman army, to execute vengeance on the Jewish nation, which they themselves 'had prayed for,' when they called aloud for his blood before Pilate, who, wicked as he was, declared he found no fault in him, and was desirous to let him go.

How soon, that is, in about thirty-seven years after this transaction, the most astonishing by far ever known throughout the universe, did these Jewish apostates from all their own prophets and expectations, these infernal murderers of God's only and beloved Son, according to his threatening prophecy, Matt. xxiv. 2; Luke xxi. 6, taste the bitter fruits of his vengeance in a total ruin of their temple, their city, and their whole nation! The particular account of their sufferings may be seen in Josephus, a learned Jew, and no Christian, who was present in the Roman army, when this

vengeance was executed. But you may see it in the prophecy of Moses, Deut. xxviii. almost as particularly, and more strongly related, one thousand four hundred and fifty years before the dreadful event. A most hideous havoc had been made of the Jews, throughout their other towns before the Roman army formed the siege of Jerusalem; but as soon as they began to throw up ramparts, &c. about it, all the Christians then in the city, warned by the signs which Christ had given them, fled from it with the utmost haste, Matt. xxiv. 17, and did not stop till they passed the river Jordan; by which means they happily escaped the most severe calamity that ever fell on mankind, before or since. When the siege was so perfectly formed, that nobody could go in or out of the city, there were men enough in it, and they of the most desperate resolution, to have easily destroyed all the Romans. There was also so great a plenty of arms and provisions in it, that the defenders held their besiegers in the utmost contempt. Three numerous parties of them fell to plundering and murdering one another with a rage and barbarity never heard of among nations, most furiously set on mutual destruction; while a very few appeared on the walls for defence of the rest. As any of these parties prevailed, which they all did by turns, they murdered as many of the rest as they could lay their hands on, carried away their provisions, and hid them in the most secret places they could find. The effect of this was such a famine among the aged, the women, and the children, that the mothers, in great numbers, killed and devoured their own infants. It would be as tedious as it is shocking, to dwell any farther on the horrible particulars, as Josephus hath done. But it is worth observing, that when the Romans had taken the city, they found a quantity of provisions, concealed here and there, sufficient to have supported all the inhabitants for twice the time of the siege; some say for a whole year longer than it lasted. The Roman general, Titus, a man of great humanity, would have saved the temple; but between his exasperated soldiers, and the execrable Jews, it was burnt to the ground. Of the Jews, one million and a hundred thousand were put to the sword, ninety-seven thousand carried into captivity, and it is thought, not a smaller number perished,

throughout the rest of the country, by their own hands, and the calamities of that war.

From that time to this, the Jews who escaped by flight, or happened to be dispersed in other countries, have lived a vagabond life, often oppressed and massacred, and every where abhorred, throughout the far greater part of the world, not excepting those nations who have never yet owned Christ for their Saviour. Some think they are now more numerous than ever they were. This is probable; but be it as it will, they bear testimony every where to the truth of those prophecies, which fix the time and place of Christ's appearance in the world; which foretell his miracles, his death, and his resurrection. Theirs is that sort of testimony or evidence, which among mankind is esteemed the most convincing, as it is the testimony of implacable enemies. As soon, however, as the benefit of this testimony shall have been, in the eye of Providence, sufficiently enjoyed by the Church of Christ, and the 'fulness of the Gentiles shall come in,' this blindness in part, which hath fallen upon the Jews, will be removed, and they shall turn to Christ in such a manner as to greatly refresh the faith of that generation, and to draw in with them prodigious multitudes of the still unbelieving Gentiles, who will be convinced that the prophecies of the New Testament, concerning the kingdom of Christ, in their surprising completion, bear such a testimony to the truth of his religion, as will render that of the formerly unbelieving Jews no longer useful.

About three hundred years after the ruin of Jerusalem and its temple, the Roman emperor Julian, formerly a Christian, but then a heathen, and a bitter enemy to Christ and his religion, not so much to please the Jews, as to mortify the Christians, and still more to defeat the prophecy of Christ concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, invited the Jews, then grown somewhat wealthy, to come from all parts of the empire, and to rebuild their temple; promising to assist them with his treasures and artificers. They assembled, and great preparations of materials, &c. were made on the spot where the old temple stood. But as soon as they began to clear the ground, an earthquake threw all again into confusion. This being thought a mere acci-

dent, or the effect only of a natural cause, they renewed their attempt, and opened the foundation, when fire burst out from thence, slew many of the workmen, and forced them entirely to lay aside the design. Some of the fathers of that age make mention of this extraordinary miracle, but the account of it here given, is taken from Ammianus Marcellinus, the pagan historian, a flatterer of Julian, and, if I mistake not, an officer then in his army; but certainly living and writing at that time. This, however, did not make a convert of Julian, nor of Marcellinus, for ought we read in the writings of that age; so hardened was the pride and self-sufficiency of these two infidels, of Pharaoh, and of thousands in every age.

Give me leave to shut up this historical account of prophecies and miracles with one, in each kind, more astonishing, and better known, than all I have hitherto mentioned or referred to. Our blessed Saviour said, John xii. 31—33, 'Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.' That he was lifted up on the cross from the earth, and there expired, is universally known; and that he drew mankind unto him, is as well known: but that he will draw the residue of men to him, we are sufficiently assured by this and other prophecies to the like effect, and particularly by the miraculous manner in which he drew the Roman empire, and many other nations so soon after his death, notwithstanding the offence of his cross. We are filled with amazement when we look at this event with eyes accustomed to the transactions of this world, wherein men only, and the natural course of things, seem to be concerned as agents or causes. A few poor men, all unlearned but two, undertake to contend with the whole world, with emperors, kings, philosophers, politicians, armies, devils, and to subdue them to the obedience of their crucified Master; to the adoration of this Master; to a contempt of all their own wisdom, policy, power, and gods, all hitherto by them equally idolized. And by what weapons? preaching, suffering, dying. Not by these alone, but the Holy Spirit, enabling them to out-reason the philosophers, to outspeak the orators, to conquer the armies, by a courage su-

perior to theirs in facing every calamity, every terror, and by death on crosses and in flames, to lead captive the oppressors and tyrants of this world. All this, I say, they undertook to do, and in this they succeeded, for God was with them, and by his divine and miraculous power upheld them. 'You see, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called,' as you are. 'But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence: but of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,' 1 Cor. i. 26—31. It is true, the first messengers of Christ preached a religion more rational, more lovely infinitely, than that which they opposed; they preached the true religion. But then they preached against a torrent of pride and love of pleasure, against inveterate prejudices, and against a rabble of gods, who countenanced their worshippers in all these, in every excess of wickedness, of unnatural lewdness, of unnatural murders, even as acts of worship and devotion to these horrible gods. It was in defence of these, that the most pure and holy religion was pursued through ten bloody persecutions for three hundred years, till, at length, mankind tired out with murder, and less able to torture, than the Christians to suffer, opened their eyes to the brightness of that light which had shone so long around them, to the excellence of a faith, which inspired a sort of heroism, infinitely superior to that of their Alexanders and Cæsars; a wisdom far more excellent than that of their philosophers and politicians, and pointed upward to a world, in comparison of which, that sought for by their conquerors through oceans of blood, was but a despicable lump of dirt.

Here is a miracle, wherein the laws of creation and nature are reversed, and those of human corruption, pride, pleasure, power, superstition, bigotry, idolatry, and prejudice, the most inveterate, are overpowered; nor wrought in a pri-

vate house, or in the sight of four or five thousand persons, or before the two nations of Egyptians and Jews; but before the whole world, and continued on through three or four hundred years, whereof the sabbath, the sacraments, the Scriptures, are standing monuments, and whereof every Christian, and every Jew, now on the face of the earth, are living witnesses. For how comes any man, at this day, to be a Christian, but in consequence of this miracle? Or who is a Jew, but he who, in the character of a bitter enemy, attests the purity and antiquity of those prophecies, which predict the coming of Christ; and still, as an enemy, is forced to acknowledge that the man whom we call Christ, did appear at the time, and in the place, which we assign for his nativity; and that his church and religion did spread themselves as above related.

It is matter of astonishment to the unthinking, that while all the absurd religions in the world, one only excepted, which made its progress by the sword, stole into the world by fraud, and in the dark, without opposition, the Christian religion, breathing a spirit so amiable, so divine, and supported with irresistible proofs of its truth, should have been treated with such an obstinate and long continuance of cruelty, exercised by the world on its innocent and inoffensive professors. But he who thinks at all, must perceive, that this was caused on the one side, and permitted on the other, by Providence, for the conviction of common sense in the following ages, which clearly sees that our holy religion is not of man, but of God alone. Common sense ought also to reflect, that the opposition to the soul and spirit of real Christianity, is still, even here, among its professors, carried on, though in another guise, by pride and love of pleasure in all the slaves of these vices, from the court down to the kennel. How few among the great ones believe in Christ! How few among the lowest order of men know any thing of him! How few in the middle ranks of life prefer him or his religion to the most trifling and uncertain views of profit, which may gratify their pride or love of pleasure! How are books, written in favour of Christianity, and the Bible itself, laid aside! How are those published against it bought up and devoured! What senseless arguments, and for lack of even such, what stupid jests in the mouths of drunkards and

scoffers, are every where repeated! How the devil, formerly accustomed to employ none but men of parts in his service, now ventures out in nonsense, and in the mouths of blockheads, as if by way of contempt for an age so easily fooled! This gauze of conversation, conceitedly so called, hardly substantial enough to hamper a fly, is spread in every corner, too dark to expose its flimsy texture to the purblind.

Here now hath been laid before common sense a tenfold greater degree of evidence for our holy religion, than is necessary to the conviction of a rational mind. The gracious God, who hath afforded all this evidence, and much more, not possible to be included in so short a treatise as this, knew how many obstacles to faith arise from passion and prejudice in the corrupted minds of mankind; and hath therefore dispensed a sufficient noon of light to leave the children of darkness without a shadow of excuse for their perverse and obstinate infidelity. The common sense of a fair inquirer is satisfied with far less, and, instead of any remaining doubts, is filled with gratitude and love to him who affords him more than he wants of the most important and precious of all possessions he stands in need of.

Having brought this one thing most needful to a conclusion, satisfactory, I hope, in your judgment, nothing more can be wanted but two or three short articles of appeal, which you will not think either superfluous or tedious.

In the first place, carefully examine yourselves, and fairly compare your wants with the provision made for them in the religion of your Redeemer. If you do this with humility, and that common sense your Maker hath endowed you with, you will quickly find, you are by nature too blind to know any thing of God and his will, in regard to a right conduct of yourselves, and too corrupt to perform his will when you do know it. You will also perceive, that his holy religion teaches you who he is, what he requires of you to believe and do, and gives you ability, if you are not greatly wanting to yourselves, both to believe and do according to his will, so as to ensure your eternal happiness. You will be fully convinced, that without virtue you cannot be happy; nor virtuous, without the true religion; that, after your best endeavours, you too often act against the religious rules of your

duty ; and that, when you do, if you truly repent, and believe in Christ, his atoning blood shall obtain for you a gracious and happy forgiveness. As soon as you become acquainted with yourselves and the religion of Christ, you will rejoice in the full supply that religion affords for all your wants and defects. On rationally looking into this comparison, and closing with the means of salvation revealed to you in the gospel of your Redeemer, you will, with infinite satisfaction, feel your inquiry ending in comfort, and your faith converted into well-grounded hope of everlasting peace with the Almighty.

Secondly, on a charitable supposition, that you have carefully made the inquiry and comparison, as the single thing that can possibly lead you into the way of eternal life, I appeal to your common sense, whether it ever can suffer you to forsake that way for the broad way of this wicked world, which leads downward to everlasting destruction both of soul and body. I appeal to your common sense, whether if you had your choice of a kingdom in this world, or of a single acre, you would not choose the kingdom ; or in case you were to become subject, during your life, to the government of another man, you would not wish to serve the most honest and generous of mankind, rather than the most deceitful and cruel of all tyrants ; and whether you can possibly imagine God does not expect you should make use of the common sense he hath given you in choosing him rather than the devil for your master, in choosing heaven rather than hell for your eternal place of abode. Tell yourselves now, whether these appeals are made to men of common sense, or to the most desperate madman. O, that I could make this appeal to your gratitude, rather than your interest. For your worldly interest you do not want understanding, and for your much higher interest in eternity you must have some. But upon a nobler principle than that of even the most exalted selfishness, I wish to raise my appeal, and I do it to your heart and soul, whether as you believe Christ the Son of God died for you, that heart and soul can be insensible of such infinite goodness. Can you think he died for men void of gratitude ? 'Do you love him ? Why then keep his commandments ?' This is the very proof he expressly requires of your love. He knows you too well, I

fear, to ask your life in requital for his. But can you not sacrifice an appetite or passion for him, who offered up his blood for you? How can you take up your abode in the bosom of Abraham, that father of the faithful, who offered up his only son to God, if you cannot bring so small a sacrifice to his altar, the sacrifice of a beastly appetite or passion? Or how can so unthankful niggards enter into the presence of God, who offered his only and well-beloved Son on the cross for your salvation? for the salvation of you, a parcel of impious wretches, in open rebellion against him? To say any thing more on a subject which so loudly speaks itself, would be to doubt the reality of that common sense, to which I am appealing. And therefore I shall only add so short a catechism on the necessary principles of our holy religion, as may be learned in one hour; to which whosoever will not out of his whole life give that one hour, must give up all pretensions to even the name of a Christian, and to that common sense, wherewith every human creature, properly so called, is, by the Author of nature, endowed.

Some plain texts of Scripture, out of many, pointed to by their chapters and verses, separately to prove the truth of every answer in this short catechism, here follow each answer, and are referred to the several parts of each answer.

CATECHISM.

I. *Question.* What is your faith?

Answer. I believe and trust in the one only God[a] the Father, the Son,[b] and the Holy Ghost,[c] the Holy Trinity.[d]

II. *Q.* How do you hope to be saved from sin, and the eternal punishment of sin?

A. By my Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of the Father, who came into the world to save sinners.[e]

III. *Q.* What hath he done to save you from sin and its punishment?

A. He hath by his gospel, or testament left me in writing, called me to faith and repentance,[f] hath taken on him my nature with the guilt of all my sins,[g] hath in my nature

[a] Isa. xliv. 6. Matt. iv. 10. [b] 1 Tim. iii. 16. [c] Acts v. 3, 4.
[d] Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 16. 1 John v. 7. [e] Acts xvi. 31. Acts iv. 12.
[f] Mark xvi. 16. Acts ii. 38.
[g] Matt. i. 23. 1 Cor. v. 21. Isa. liii. 6. 1 Cor. xv. 3.

suffered death, the wages of sin, for me[h] insomuch, that if I believe in him, and repent, I shall be forgiven;[i] and the third day after his death arose again to life for the justification of this my faith. Rom. iv. 25.

IV. *Q.* Do you hope for any thing more in and through Christ?

A. Yes, for eternal life in heaven.[k]

V. *Q.* Hath he done any thing farther to secure God's mercy to you, and your obedience to God?

A. He hath in my baptism made a covenant of peace between his Father and me, whereof he himself is the Mediator;[l] and hath offered me the food of eternal life,[m] namely, his spiritual body and blood in his last supper, whereby, if I constantly and worthily receive it, I am fed to virtue, and that happy life by his Holy Spirit.[n]

VI. *Q.* What hath the Father promised you in this covenant?

A. To adopt me for his own child,[o] to unite me to his Son as a member of his spiritual body, the church,[p] and to provide for me an inheritance of everlasting life, if I perform my part in this covenant.[q]

VII. *Q.* What is your part in this covenant?

A. I have therein vowed to renounce and fight against the enemies of his glory and my salvation,[r] to believe all the articles of the Christian faith,[s] and to keep the commandments of God,[t] which I cannot do, if I do not, in a reasonable degree, understand those articles and commandments.

VIII. *Q.* What are the enemies of God and your salvation?

A. The devil,[u] the world,[x] and the flesh.[y]

IX. *Q.* Have you any reason for renouncing these together?

A. Yes, because they combine against God and my soul. I renounce the devil as the author of rebellion and sin;[z] the pride and pomp of the world, as his instruments of tempta-

[h] Rom. v. 6. 1 Cor. xv. 9. [i] Acts xiii. 38. Acts xxvi. 20. Acts xvi. 31.
[k] John vi. 47. 1 Pet. v. 14. [l] Matt. xxvi. 28. Heb. vii. 22. Heb. viii. 6.
[m] John vi. 53. John vi. 50. [n] Rom. viii. 16. Eph. i. 13.
[o] Gal. iii. 26, 27. Rom. viii. 15. [p] 1 Cor. xii. 27. [q] 1 John ii. 25.
[r] James i. 12. [s] Mark xvi. 16. [t] Matt. xxviii. 20.
[u] 1 John iii. 8. James iv. 7. [x] 1 John ii. 15, 16. Rom. xii. 2.
[y] Gal. v. 24. Rom. viii. 13. [z] Rev. xii. 7. Gen. iii. 4, 5.

tion;[a] and also the pride and lust of my own corrupted heart, as those inward traitors that lay me open to his temptations.[b]

X. *Q.* Do you renounce all fleshly pleasure?

A. All, in thought, word, and deed, so far as it is sinful, and even innocent pleasure, so far as it may enfeeble my Christian resolution, and turn away my affections from God.[c]

XI. *Q.* What are you to believe?

A. Not only in the one only God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but also, that God is always present with me;[d] knows every thing I speak, think, and do;[e] that he will call me into judgment for them at the last day;[f] and that he will adjudge me to happiness in heaven, or misery in hell, according as I shall have performed, or neglected, my engagements in the covenant.[g]

XII. *Q.* And what have you vowed to do, or abstain from, in this covenant?

A. I have vowed to do, to the best of my power, whatsoever God requires of me, and to abstain from whatsoever he forbids me in his ten commandments, delivered to the Israelites in the law by Moses, confirmed by Christ to all Christians, and summed up by him in two, Matt. ii. 22. and, among others, most particularly to obey his commandments, to mortify my pride, and love of fleshly pleasure, those original and diabolical causes of all other sins;[h] together with his commandment of love for all my Christian brethren.[i]

XIII. *Q.* Are you of yourself able to keep your part in this covenant?

A. I am not; but I am commanded by my Saviour, continually to watch, lest I enter into temptation,[k] and incessantly to pray for the assistance of the Holy Ghost, which he hath promised to all endeavouring Christians.[l]

XIV. *Q.* Do you believe in the holy Catholic church, and in its four happy privileges?

A. I do believe in the holy Catholic church,[m] in the com-

[a] 1 John ii. 16. Phil. ii. 3. [b] Rom. xiii. 14. Gal. v. 17. Job v. 24.
[c] 2 Tim. iii. 4. Eccles. ii. 1. [d] Psal. cxxxix. 7, 8, 9. Acts xvii. 27, 28.
[e] Acts xv. 18. Matt. x. 26. [f] Rom. ii. 3. Rom. ii. 5.
[g] Matt. xxv. 31. 2 Cor. v. 10.
[h] Mark xiii. 37. Rom. viii. 13. Matt. xi. 29. Matt. xvi. 24.
[i] John xiii. 34, 35. 1 Cor. xiii. [k] Mark xiii. 37. Luke xviii. 1.
[l] John xiv. 26. Acts x. 44, 45. Rom. viii. 5. Rom. xiv. 17. 1 Cor. vi. 19.
[m] 1 Tim. iii. 15. Matt. xviii. 17.

munion of saints,[n] the forgiveness of sins,[o] the resurrection of the body,[p] and everlasting life,[q] and in every religious doctrine which the truly catholic church tells me by its head Christ Jesus, who, as the head always does, in his holy Scriptures, speaks to and for his whole body, the church; and I likewise believe that whosoever does not endeavour 'to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' nor to live and act by 'the mind of Christ Jesus,' is cut off from him and his body.[r]

I have made this catechism as short and easy as possibly can be, without omitting any thing that is necessary, for two reasons: first, because I am sure, the knowledge of our religion is, in itself, short and easy; and secondly, because I fear there are some among you who will not give much time nor thought even to this one thing needful. Let such however consider, if they have indeed the use of common sense, how they can pass their lives in carelessness and ignorance as to religion, with death, judgment, and eternity before them. If the attentive reader of this catechism remembers scriptures sufficient to prove its doctrines, he hath nothing farther to do than to apply them feelingly to his conscience; but if he does not, let him at least search his Bible for those I have quoted, and he must be satisfied; for how often must God repeat the same thing to him, ere he can be convinced of its truth? And yet he hath been pleased to repeat these saving truths in many other passages of Scripture with a variety of plain expressions, which its attentive reader will himself observe and remember for his own use.

Here is a very short view of the most necessary Christian principles, in regard both to faith and practice, which include and enforce on your minds a number of most excellent precepts, besides these necessary principles, such as, 'be you perfect men, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect God;' 'forgive and you shall be forgiven;' 'overcome evil with good;' 'do unto all men, as you would they should do unto you;' with many others, delivered by Christ him-

[n] Acts ii. 42. Eph. iii. 6. [o] Acts xxvi. 18. Luke xxiv. 47.
[p] John v. 28, 29. [q] John vi. 47.
[r] Eph. iv. 2, 3. 1 Cor. v. 5. Mark xvi. 16. Heb. x. 25.

self, or by the Holy Spirit, writing by the apostles, all closely connected with, or following from, the leading principles, delivered to you in this short catechism, which you will find, and ought carefully to consider, in the Scriptures of the New Testament. But among them all there is not one that might be applied to our hearts with more profit than Christ's saying of little children, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Here the humility, the simplicity, and innocence of the Christian temper and spirit is set before our very eyes in a lovely little image, more strongly by far than words can possibly express it. If the great masters of painting have adopted this thought to represent the high order of cherubim by winged infants, should not the soul of a Christian much rather endeavour to copy into itself the beautiful representation?

Finally, my beloved brethren, attend closely to the promise of eternal life, made to you in the gospel of God, that ye may firmly believe in, and trust to that promise, for St. Paul tells all true Christians, 'ye stand by faith.' 'Stand fast therefore in that faith,' according to the exhortation of the same apostle; 'quit ye like men; be strong. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.' Begin with this 'work of God, to believe in him whom he hath sent.' Lift up 'this shield of faith, which shall quench all the fiery darts of the wicked,' and enable you both to prove and adorn your Christian profession by good works in the service of the living God, who hath told you, that 'the just shall live by his faith,' that is, shall rule his life by the principles of his faith, and by that faith shall be justified at the last day. As however you can do nothing of yourselves, fly to God, your strength, 'praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance.' If 'faith, no greater than a grain of mustard seed, is able to remove a mountain,' how much more easily may it remove the poor little hillock of your pride, and dry up the filthy puddle which the love of sinful pleasure and of worldly gain hath poured upon you? If this is once done, your conscience having dropped its clog, your lightened soul shall spring upward toward God on the wings of that faith, and on those of

gratitude and love. The world sets before you only little things, seen it is true, but uncertain as riches, 'which make themselves wings and fly away,' carrying with them your sensual pleasures, and all your folly prides itself in. Faith in the promise of God offers you great things, unseen indeed at present, but absolutely certain and eternal. If 'you live by faith, and not by the sight of your eyes and the pride of life,' these great things shall in you shut out the sight of those little things, 'and this is the victory which overcometh the world, even your faith.' This, for instance, is that wise and glorious faith, which, fixing the eye of the soul on a judgment to pass on it, and on the eternal joy or misery that is to follow that judgment, encourages the martyr to die in flames for his holy religion.

And it is that same faith, which calling up your attention and desires 'from things below, and fixing them on things above, on the glory, honour, and immortality,' engaged to you by the promise of God, may 'mortify the deeds of the flesh' in you, and give you a claim to the character of martyrs; for who are martyrs, but they who renouncing themselves, their corrupted nature, their 'pride and sensual pleasures,' repose themselves, with all their hopes and comfort in God? Every true Christian, though not called to the stake for his religion, is in some degree a martyr, for 'he dies daily' by the mortification of sensuality, and imitates Christ, the great martyr, 'who before Pilate witnessed a good confession for us.' Do not be discouraged at this, for 'your short affliction' in dying to the pleasures of sin 'shall work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' If your faith shuts you in from pride and fleshly pleasure, it opens to you the glories of an immortal crown, 'and those rivers of pleasures which flow at the right hand of God,' insomuch that, even in this life, your conscience and hope in him shall pour upon you such delights as infinitely exceed those of the sensualist. Know, 'that while you are at home in the body,' more especially if you at all obey your body, to 'fulfil the lusts thereof, you are absent from the Lord.' Although, therefore, you 'walk in the body, do not walk after the body.' Be willing rather to be absent from the body, that 'through the Spirit you may be present with the Lord. Know you not, that your body is the tem-

ple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you,' which you have from God, and that you are 'not your own? for you are bought with a price. Defile not the temple of God' by filling it with carnal impurities, 'but glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.' You may glorify God the more for being in such a body, if you 'fight the good fight of faith' against the corruptions and disorderly affections of that body; if you labour, as you ought to do, to cleanse it from all pollution, that it may be a fit habitation for his Holy Spirit. 'Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. I will be a Father to them, and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is the Lord that worketh in you, both to will and to do.'

The sacrifices of beasts, appointed as acts of devotion in the old world, were considered by all, who understood the true intent and end of that appointment, as representations and shadows of the one only great and effectual sacrifice of Christ for the sins of all men. Since that hath been offered up on the cross, those shadows are lost in the substance, and there is now no more sacrifice for sin. Yet there are still some other sacrifices to be made by us as proofs of our gratitude and love towards God, as free-will offerings of duty to him, and as means of purification in ourselves. You are at all times, but more especially when you commemorate the death of Christ in his last supper, 'to offer up yourselves, your souls and bodies, as a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto God,' whose property ye are by right of creation and purchase on his part, and of the baptismal vow, renewed and repeated at his table, on yours. Nay, the sacrifice of beasts, in some sense, is still due by us; I mean the sacrifice of the beasts within us, not the innocent lambs and doves of our good dispositions, considered as offerings rather than sacrifices; but the goats of our lascivious desires; the devouring wolves of our avarice and oppression; the savage tigers of our pride, wrath, and revenge; the wily and venomous serpents of our fraudulent arts, and poisonous

calumnies. With these we must not play, as with the dogs and cats of our own harmless humours, but must slay them on the altar of God, as not more odious to him, than destructive to ourselves. Here we ought to cut them in pieces, that the fire from heaven of our holy religion may consume them. This it is to be 'kings and priests to God;' kings, in ruling our own rebellious passions with a royal severity; and priests, in offering up to him sacrifices by such self-denial, as he hath shewn by offering up for us his precious blood, an infinitely greater self-denial, as then he quitted the glories of heaven, to save us from the infamy and torments of hell. Thus it is, my dearly beloved in Christ, that you should prepare yourselves to celebrate his death at his own table. But if you go on to indulge and overfeed these beasts within you by gluttony, drunkenness, wantonness, quarrelling, murdering, what do you become but entirely beasts yourselves? what do you make your bodies, but temples, and yourselves, but priests, of the devil? what but priests, who consume yourselves in fire from hell, as so many burnt-offerings to that horrible author of all your sins and miseries? Let your common sense answer these questions to itself. Ask the word of God, how it came to pass, that 'the faith of Abraham was counted to him for righteousness?' Ask it, why he is called 'the father of the faithful?' and it will tell you, because he offered up his beloved son to God, and in so doing was ready and willing to slay with his own hand the most innocent and amiable son, as dear to him as his own life, and the heir of all the promises. And can you call yourselves the children of this patriarch, if you sacrifice nothing? Can you hope to shelter yourselves in his bosom when you die, if you will not part with things of far less value, to prove the firmness of your faith, and the sincerity of your Christian profession; to save your souls; to please and honour your God, who gave up his only-begotten and well-beloved Son for your salvation?

Among many others, in yourselves, and in the world around you, there is one most dangerous and deadly snare laid for you by the devil; whereof you cannot be too often nor too alarmingly warned; whereof Christ, foreseeing your weakness, blindness, and even inclination to fall into it, hath repeatedly cautioned you to beware; and the Holy Spirit, by St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, and St. Jude, hath over and

over again reinforced this warning, not only to the Christians of their own time, but prophetically to all Christians of all times, and especially, if I mistake not, to us in these latter times. It is this, 'Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.'

The word prophet, in the Old Testament, generally signifies one who foretells somewhat that is to come, perhaps long after it is foretold; but in the New Testament, a teacher, whether true or false, of religion, is, for the most part, styled a prophet. In this last sense it is that our Saviour is to be understood, when he requires you to be on your guard against false prophets or teachers. He knew that many such were 'to come in his name, and to deceive many,' by pretending to teach men of your kind the real truths of religion, but 'artfully bringing in damnable doctrines,' with false reasonings, and forced interpretations of Scripture; wearing outwardly the mask of piety, and pretending to be the only safe guides to truth, while from within he foresaw they would bring forth nothing but principles contrary to his, deceitfully leading their unwary hearer into all manner of wickedness.

Such deceivers, in considerable numbers, had thrust themselves into the church of Christ, in the very time of the apostles, insomuch that antichrist, a common name for all this sort of men, was then at work. It was on their account that St. John says to you, 'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.' You ask how shall plain men, like us, be able to try the doctrines of men so much more learned than ourselves, and so exceedingly cunning? I answer, easily, if you bring their doctrines to the touchstone of God's word, as the Psalmist had done, when he said, 'I am wiser than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation.' That, when you have any cause to suspect the doctrine of one pretending to teach you, the trial of his doctrine may be more easy, expeditious, and safe in its success, I have above furnished you with a very short and plain catechism, wherein every necessary principle of Christian faith and practice is laid down, and separately supported by texts of Scripture, the meaning of which you cannot mistake. This I have done, and made this whole

appeal to your common sense, because I am sensible, that in no age of the church so many wolves in wool ever spread themselves among the people of Christ, as in the present.

Wherefore if any of these false prophets should bid you pray to saints or angels, or kneel before images or pictures of any kind, the first two commandments of God forbidding you to do either, will sufficiently guard you. If any one should endeavour to seduce you into a dependance on your own righteousness, and not on faith in the blood of Christ, for your salvation, reject him with abhorrence; for Christ says, 'Whosoever believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned.' And the Spirit of God, by St. Peter, saith, 'There are false prophets among the people, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.'

On the contrary, if any one should teach you to depend on faith alone, and run down the necessity of good works, as the fruits and proofs of Christian faith, cast him from you, and listen to the Spirit of God in St. James, saying, 'Faith without works is dead. The devils believe and tremble.' If any of these false prophets should blasphemously teach you that neither Christ nor the Holy Ghost is the true eternal God, shut your ears against the devil, speaking in that serpent, and open your eyes to the word of God, quoted against him in the aforesaid catechism. 'Trust in the Lord,' saith Solomon, 'with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own understanding,' nor, let me add, to the understanding of other men, as fallible as yourself, since you have the wisdom of God's word to depend on. 'He that is of God, heareth God's words.' Your false teachers, 'hear them not; because they are not of God.' I press these scriptures upon you the more earnestly, because I doubt your ignorance and unwariness; and fear, as St. Paul did in the like case, 'lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ.' My little catechism furnishes only two or three texts to prove each article, and your reading in the holy Scriptures will add many more to the same purposes; but not that one word of God should be enough for you to refute all that the devil's prophets can allege to the contrary, who, in imitation of their Master, quote Scripture, and

endeavour 'to transform themselves into so many angels of light.' And yet, 'if an angel from heaven were to teach you any other gospel than that which God himself hath taught you,' as he must be accursed of God, so he ought to be of you. 'The word and grace of God shall be sufficient for you,' if you are not wanting to them, and to yourselves.

Christ gave outward or bodily sight to such as were blind in a literal sense. He also opened the eyes of the mind, and poured in a day of spiritual light on 'souls that sat in darkness, and the shadow of death.' 'I,' saith he, 'am the light of the world. I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me.' Fix your eyes on this way, every step of which is rendered visible to you by his truth and light shining from thence, and on the eternal life to which it leads you. In 'this road, the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err.' The great principles necessary to salvation, 'God hath hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes;' hid them from the learned and worldly wise, and revealed them to you, the simple babes and children of Christ Jesus. Did not the devil blind the eyes of our first parents, when he persuaded them to take a serpent for their teacher and guide, rather than God, in direct contradiction to the word of their Creator? When he led them out of the upward way of truth and obedience, that is, of common sense, into the downward way of 'pride and appetite?' Will you, as they did, suffer the blind beast within to guide you? Instead of looking and going upright to God, as reasonable men should do, will you submit to crawl like that venomous worm to the devil? Were not the minds of your forefathers spiritually blind to common sense itself, when they worshipped stocks and stones, modelled by their own hands, and even devils? And are you less blind, if you fall down to the indwelling beasts of corrupt affections and foul imaginations, now that Christ hath come from heaven to shew you the vanity, the vileness, the danger, the misery, of following these more abominable idols? It is not the proud, the cruel, the lustful beast alone, that works in the unregenerate heart. There is also an evil spirit in possession of that heart, which gives its power to that beast, as it did to the serpent in the temptation of Eve, and which none but the Holy Spirit of Christ can drive out; and it is frequently of so obstinate a kind, that 'with-

out fasting and prayer,' the dispossession is not to be effected.

If you know yourselves, and easily you may, to be but poor, weak, despicable beings, how can you be proud? On the other hand, if you take yourselves to be great and good beings, why then enslaved to this wretched world? Why then drenched in drunkenness and lust? Why liable to be undone by every pitiful temptation? If you inherit even the devil's blessing, to know good and evil, why turn you away from the good, and fly to embrace the evil? Supposing this to be your practice, most assuredly you want the aid of Christ to open your eyes, and by a greater miracle than that afforded to blind Bartimeus.

You love liberty; what, only that you may be wicked without fear of punishment! Were this possible, which God will never suffer it to be, it would, in you, quickly prove itself to be the most abject sort of slavery. You can have no master so tyrannical as your own will, no guide so dangerous as your own wish. If you come to be taught of Christ, you shall soon perceive, that he 'who committeth sin, is the servant, or slave, of sin: you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free indeed;' shall mortify the beast within you; shall dethrone your ugly tyrant, sin; shall shew you the honourable liberty of God's service, with the path of real happiness, and give you strength to walk steadily therein, till you arrive at its blessed end.

If he is pleased thus to instruct you, common sense will pronounce you worse than mad, in case you put yourselves into the hands, knowing them to be such, not only of very fallible, but most deceitful teachers: and whether they are or not, your Bible will inform you. Were you to make a plough or loom, having already a pretty good notion of both, and a master carpenter at hand to direct you, you would not quit him, and ask instructions from some boy, not half a year at the trade, especially if, on hearing this raw creature speak, you found he knew nothing of the matter. Now, as you have God himself to teach you religion, your madness in this case must be ten thousand times greater than in the former, should you trust your souls to ignorant and conceited pretenders, nay, to known cheats and deceivers, as guides to truth and happiness, when by the word of God you may so

easily try them, or at least their doctrines. If common sense hath not wholly forsaken you, it is impossible you can think of insulting the goodness and majesty of Heaven by preferring their folly and wickedness to his infinite wisdom. What, to trust the wretched quacks of opinion more than God! How impious, how damnable the stupidity, especially when you know their principles are directly contrary to those he hath taught you! In your worldly affairs you will not depend, as to the smallest concerns, on a known villain. You must therefore rate your souls lower than a single shilling, if you follow a more careless conduct in regard to them.

They who choose their own teachers, as too many do, under circumstances of ignorance and partiality, make themselves accountable for the soundness, or unsoundness, of the doctrines which they, their wives, and children are to hear. And what other directions can they have, either in choosing, or afterward listening to them, but the word of God? Should it be novelty, or worldly interest, or family connexions, or popularity, or the recommendation of a rich man, that guides their choice, they are by far more likely to pitch on an ass or wolf, than on any better sort of animal. If among electors there are some (and possibly not a few) of loose principles themselves, they will certainly give their voices to men of like mind, without caring much, how this may affect the simpler part of the flock. 'Take heed how ye hear,' saith Christ, whether in the pulpit, or in conversation. There is not a more deadly poison than that which is poured into the ear. This kills the very souls. 'Your itching ears are apt to heap to themselves teachers,' especially of new doctrines, whereas there can be nothing new in Christianity. All was, of old, fixed by the word of God, where every thing necessary or helpful to make a man 'wise unto salvation,' hath been provided and fully laid open. If you do not already know it, take it as an act of the tenderest charity towards you, and of conscientious duty to God, when I inform you, that a great number of those, in all denominations, who at present take upon them to teach you, are either grossly ignorant, or make it their business to spread opinions in matters of religion, not more contrary to one another, than to the plainest principles of Christianity; insomuch that

little else, but heresy, schism, dissension, hatred, confusion, and at last infidelity, can be gathered from the tares they are sowing throughout the patrimony of Christ, some part of which takes root among the good seed, even in the best soil. Yet howsoever unscriptural their opinions and doctrines may be, if they have been really ordained to the ministry by the church of Christ, their errors cannot hinder his sacraments to have their saving effects, though coming from their hands; for it is the Holy Spirit, and 'the answer of a good conscience' in you, which produce those effects, and not the soundness of principles, nor piety of the administrators. However, they should be sent from God, who take upon them to deliver to you these his inestimable gifts.

The church or body of Christ is one body; so is yours. How great would be your pain, if all your limbs were disjointed on the rack, and your flesh torn to pieces with pincers! And can you think Christ feels less sensibly through his spiritual body, while it is racked, torn, and crucified afresh by these dissensions, this variety of antichristian opinions, this implacable hatred, ever ready to pull out the sword, and kindle the faggot of one pretended Christian against another? He felt through his natural body on the cross, at least as keenly as ever man did in the like circumstances; yet this, with infinite pity and love for you, he sacrificed for his spiritual body, as dearer to him. Will you then outdo the cruelty of Caiaphas and Pilate in aiding these impostors to mangle this his most beloved body? Hear the great law of Christian peace, and at all times remember that 'Christ is the prince of peace.' If in the established religion of any country wherein you dwell, or but sojourn, every thing made necessary to your salvation by the word of God, is afforded, and nothing laid upon you contrary to that word, you are an enemy to Christian peace, if you do not conform to the aforesaid church. You ought to know, that the religion of Christ, like himself, is light in the human understanding, and love in the human heart. In the disputes, raised by the firebrands, of whom I have been warning you, there is nothing but darkness and confusion. In the divisions they make, nothing but hatred. Can hatred be the Spirit of Christ, who says to us all, 'by this shall all men

know, that you are my disciples, if you love one another;' observe, not, if you are loved, but 'if you love' one another? Can dissension be the spirit of unity among Christians? Can animosity be the bond of peace, which is to connect all the members of Christ to one another, and to their head? There is nothing more contrary to common sense.

It ought however considerably to strengthen your faith in the holy Scriptures, to see these false teachers therein foretold, and their characters so plainly drawn, that you can hardly mistake them. St. Paul, speaking to the bishops of Asia, and through them to us all, saith, 'grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.' Therefore watch. 'There were,' saith St. Peter, 'false prophets of old among the Jewish people even as there shall be false teachers among you, who shall privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them,' both denying his divinity, and the purchase made of their souls by his blood; 'and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of, and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.' It is, you perceive, the aim of all their arts, and deceitful discourses, to enrich themselves at the expense of your worldly substance, and even of your souls. It is another of their features, given by this prophetic painter, that 'they are presumptuous and self-willed; that they despise government, and are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.' It would be unreasonable to expect, that they who 'fear not God, should honour the king.' Accordingly, you find they are all rebels. It is another, that 'they speak evil of things they understand not.' There is no sort of men who know less of either religion or government, nor that take such foul-mouthed liberties with both; and yet, as Christ's kingdom is not of this world, the Spirit of God forbids us, even under a Nero, to deal in politics, or 'to resist the powers' that be providentially placed over us. 'Spots they are, and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings,' while over the dish and bottle in your feasts they spread about infidel opinions, enforced by profane jests, instead of arguments; 'beguiling unstable souls, going astray

themselves,' and misleading fools, 'like Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness. Wells they are,' at first without a drop of Christ's living water, and to you dangerous pit-falls; but afterward filled with the stinking puddle of unbelief and wickedness. 'They are clouds, carried with a tempest, and driven about by every wind of false doctrine; leaning to their own understandings,' as all-sufficient, they despise the word of God, 'speaking great swelling words of vanity, and while they promise their hearers liberty, are themselves the servants and slaves of corruption, for of whom, or, of whatsoever, a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage. There are certain men,' saith St. Jude, 'crept in unawares, turning the grace,' or indulgence of God, in worldly things, 'into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ,' carried by an abuse of God's bounty into all manner of sin, and by sin into total infidelity. 'These are trees,' at best, 'bearing no fruit, plucked up by the roots and withered;' or loaded with such as the tempter did, and still continues to recommend. 'These are murmurers and complainers, walking after their own lusts,' which are never to be satisfied. 'These are waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame,' their own frothy blasphemies against things which they know not. 'These are wandering stars,' twinkling here and there, and setting fools agape at their unusual and unsteady motions. These are 'they who separate themselves, having not the Spirit,' who is one, and always makes one body of every set of men under his direction. To finish this prophetic character and bring its features still closer to the present times, hear what the Divine Spirit saith by St. Paul. 'Know, that in the latter days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of themselves,' delighting in their pride and lusts, 'covetous, proud, blasphemers, unthankful, unholy, ungrateful to God, and unholy in themselves, false accusers,' equally vile in themselves, and vilifiers of others; 'incontinent, fierce, and despisers of those that are good;' given up to all manner of sensuality, brutish to the rest of mankind, and particularly shewing the utmost contempt for better men than themselves; 'traitors, heady, high-minded,' betraying the cause of God by turning his religion into poison in the minds of his poor ignorant peo-

ple; giddily running after new opinions; setting themselves up as wiser than other men; and often than the penmen of the holy Scriptures; 'lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,' warmly hunting after their own worldly designs, and even professing a coldness, which they call moderation, for the Christian religion; 'having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,' talking in a high strain of morality, but running down faith as weak and superstitious; and acting as if they had not the fear of God before their eyes; 'ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth;' changing their notions of religion every day, and pleading, that God loves variety in religion, as if no one religion were better than another. 'From such turn away,' lest laying hold of your pride by their own, they should turn you away from God, who declares, there is but 'one faith,' and from Christian humility. Whenever you hear them talking high of the light of nature, know, they are infidels, and disbelieve the light of revelation. Whenever you hear them running on in the praise of benevolence, know that they use that word, as it were, to express something better than Christian charity, and have just then put on the mask, in which they mean to lead you aside from the word of God. In this they affect the angelic garb, not more to gain your confidence than to set off their own excellence. When you hear them railing at our creeds as too obscure to be understood or believed, or as the works of mere men, though they themselves are, and must be sensible, that every tittle of those creeds is founded on the plain and express words of God; know, that they mean wholly to overthrow your faith. When you hear them complain, that the commandments are too hard to be kept, recollect and know, that they are repeating the very words of the old serpent to your mother Eve. When they promise you new lights in regard to religion, and to moral good and evil, as he did, know, that you shall indeed taste the pleasures they promise you, and find your eyes and all your senses opened to the evil that is to follow with a vengeance. As true Christians, you can know nothing but good; as their disciples, you shall know evil too, both temporal and eternal.

The teachers I am warning you to be aware of, do still pretend some reverence for the commandments of God,

though they persuade you to a good life by hardly any thing else than their own reasonings and reflections. They moralize indeed, as it is called, but seldom or never on the principles of the gospel, or draw their reasonings from the articles of Christian faith. This is preaching up themselves, not Christ Jesus. The commandments are indeed holy, and pure, and good. They are the great rules, by which we are to live now, and to be judged hereafter. But no man follows a rule of action without some reason or motive for so doing. Now, the reasons or motives to every Christian for keeping the commandments, and obeying God, are found in the articles of our faith. Our creed is the very life and soul of the commandments. But these teachers affect to treat the articles of our creed with contempt; seldom or never dwell on those articles in their discourses, but give you their own feeble reflections in favour of a regular life, instead of them. Fools, I call them, as is evident from the almost universal corruption of manners, and the horrible growth of wickedness, which have spread among us ever since this unaffecting manner of handling the cause of Christian virtue hath prevailed in these unhappy kingdoms. The fear and love of God, with the spirit of piety, devotion, virtue, and even common decency, forsook us, as fast as we forsook our faith. Let me, my dearly beloved in Christ, persuade you to come back, to examine your creed, and the word of God, that you may clearly see what stress is laid on that faith. Consider, without believing in God your Father, who made you, and the world for you, how is it to be hoped, you, as his child, should love him, and serve him in keeping his commandments? Without believing in God your Saviour, who died for you, how is it to be hoped you should love him, and keep his commandments, the very proof he requires 'of your love.' Without believing in God your Comforter, how is it to be hoped you can keep the commandments, since his great purpose in descending on you is to enforce obedience to those commandments? Without believing in a judgment to come, and a heaven or hell to follow that judgment, how can it be hoped, that you should make these commandments the rule of your life here, or feelingly consider them as the rules whereby you are to be judged hereafter? Are these articles of your faith to be kept

out of sight? Or what other principles can serve instead of them to keep a nature so corrupt and frail as yours within the bounds of its duty, and to a sense of its eternal interest? The highest degrees of fear, gratitude, love, are here called forth with the voice of God. All your desire of happiness, all your horror of misery, both infinite and eternal, are here awaked by that trumpet which shall raise the dead. Hear it with the ears of your heart, and arise to a new life; so shall you have your share in the first resurrection.

After so many repeated warnings from our blessed Redeemer Christ and the Holy Ghost; after a character and picture, so plainly unmasking the present deceivers; after, by your own experience, observing the horrible flood of infidelity, of corruption, and wickedness, streaming from these fountains of vice and confusion, and sweeping before it all ranks of men, in pride, luxury, wantonness, perjury, iniquity, oppression; can you think of giving your ears and hearts to such destroyers? As they are 'bringing on themselves swift destruction;' as they are soon 'utterly to perish in their own corruption, whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not; and whose damnation slumbereth not;' can you, if you join them, hope for a better fate than that of your leaders? 'Cease, my son,' saith Solomon, 'to hear the instruction, which causeth to err from the words of knowledge,' namely, the words of God. 'Whoso despiseth these words, shall be destroyed; but he that feareth the commandment, shall be rewarded.'

The real church of Christ is a society, bound together by love; but all sectaries labour to divide the visible church into associations, dismembered and imbittered by hatred, which frequently, and in no small degree, affects the peace and truth of the real church; out of which, however, there is no salvation for him, who can read or hear the word of God. Whosoever cuts himself off from this church, cuts himself off from Christ its head, 'and delivers himself over to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh;' and if he do not, in time, by faith and repentance, restore himself to the communion of Christ, for that of his soul also. 'If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.' And in close pursuance of this admonition given you by the Holy Spirit, if any man

presumes, publicly or privately, to teach you any thing else, different from or contrary to the gospel, which you have already received in the word of God, ‘ let him be accursed.’ Assure yourselves, that whosoever does so, is secretly the enemy of Christ, and of your souls. The Holy Spi rit hath perfected the gospel of God, and hath left nothing for any man to add, to take away, or to change, howsoever ‘ the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.’ Know, that he, who is here called the God of this world, in a severe reflection on the submission of mankind to him, is no other than the devil?

No friend of truth will call me uncharitable for the harshness of the terms I use in speaking of these reprobate deceivers, when he finds, I take them from the word of God himself, or can so easily justify them by that word, and by my tenderness for the safety of those souls I am speaking to. You would laugh at him, who should call it uncharitable to proceed with thieves, robbers, and cut-throats, as the laws appoint, that is to throw them into dungeons, load them with irons, expose them to public infamy in trials, and hang them when found guilty; nor can you justly say, he is uncharitable, who, in a most affectionate regard for your souls, points out to you the snares laid for you by a far worse kind of men, far worse surely, for when they pretend to preach up Christianity, they labour only to corrupt and subvert its fundamental principles in your minds; they but spunge on Christ and your property, ‘ making merchandise of your souls,’ and havoc of all your hopes. Whether their ways of thinking are right or wrong, can this their practice be right? Or can the cause of God admit, or that of truth require, the aid of imposture, of lies borrowed from the devil? Was it so that Christ and his apostles maintained the cause of our holy religion against the persecuting power of Jews and Romans? Ought not the faithful watchman to give warning, when he sees the enemy secretly undermining the foundations of Christ's church, and his religion? When he sees the wolf stealing through a thicket to worry the sheep? In such a case, his dog, as I, if not a ‘ dumb dog,’ should bark aloud, be his voice ever so sharp and harsh. If

our holy and most charitable religion utterly abhors and forbids all persecution for it, more than against it, common sense cannot therefore conclude, that its defender is uncharitable, or a persecutor for unmasking its corrupters and betrayers, and branding them on the forehead with those names, they take so much pains to deserve; as there is no other way to rouse the unsuspecting to a due care of themselves. It would be hard to say, that every degree of zeal for the worst purpose in the world is to be commended, nay, encouraged; and that zeal for the cause of Christ should be run down.

I solemnly call God to witness, that it is against my principles, my very nature, to turn accuser, and to speak of mankind with this severity; that I lash not at these teachers through envy, because many of them are more esteemed, or placed higher in the church than myself, who am therein stationed far above my deserts; nor through personal spleen or resentment at any one of them; but purely through abhorrence at their dissimulation, through an honest zeal for the truths of our holy religion, and for the eternal salvation of Christ's plain and simple members. Who dare censure this zeal, and yet wink at the treachery of those, from whom I have endeavoured to tear the woollen clothing? But if they despise the imputed righteousness of Christ, and set up their own as better, which they all do, let them tell us, what is that boasted morality of theirs, by which they hope to be justified in the sight of God? What is that bill of rights, whereby they bring him in as their debtor, and challenge the heavenly crown? Is it their gross imposition on the church of Christ? their shameless prevarication, in matters of religion, between God and his people, and all for mere worldly advancement. Is this Christian humility? Is this common honesty? What sort of a master must he be, that can allow this to pass for morality or merit? As to my own, perhaps unimportant part in the exposure, above made, I again solemnly protest, there is nothing, next to my own salvation, which I so ardently wish for, as to see the flock of Christ, with its guides, howsoever differenced, brought back again to the pastures and waters of the great Shepherd. To the repair of his temple, along with a large contribution from himself, and his Holy Spirit, I have cast in my mite, and, I

trust in God, would gladly throw in my life, were it to add any thing to the blessed fund, or were it required by my Saviour.

What is here said, so far as it may be understood of infidel preachers among those who do not communicate with the established churches of Great Britain and Ireland, on account of their falsehood between God and his people, is justly due to them; and indeed it is difficult to speak of them in terms too severe for their practice, or your warning. And yet these are far outdone by the villainy and hypocrisy now practised by many preachers in our established churches, where they cannot be admitted without subscribing, and solemnly declaring for, such creeds and confessions of faith, as flatly condemn the principles they bring with them, and afterward use their utmost endeavours covertly to introduce among the people. Of all sorts of men these are certainly the worst. All their wealth, pomp, and splendour, built on the sacrilegious plunder of Christ's church, cannot hide the infamy of their most horrible Atheism. Yes, Atheism, I insist, for if they believed in God at all, they must fear to offend him with a prevarication so impious. What! in the house of God! almost daily to repeat the creeds! and the invocations at the beginning of the Litany, and on their knees! to his very face! to insult him with devotions, which they themselves detest, and know he in them abhors! but how otherwise can they rob the church of that wealth which is thus turned against religion, and, as in other robberies, tempts her spoilers to murder the possessor?

As our Saviour joins together his prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the world, making the former, which was soon to happen, a type of the latter, not yet come to pass; in like manner, the apostles I have quoted, striking at the heretics of their own time, strike also at those of ours, who do but revive the old errors vended in the primitive ages, and under them, as less offensive to you, endeavour in vain to hide their own total apostacy from Christ and his religion. The better to conceal this, they compliment both with some honorary, but equivocal titles, yet never preach on the blessed Trinity, and scarcely ever on the satisfaction made by the death of Christ for the sins of mankind. These necessary articles of faith they keep as much

as possible out of your sight and hearing, that they may at length be forgotten, and lost to your attention; though on them is built the whole religion of Christ, and all your reasonable hopes of salvation. Ask your common sense whether, in acting thus by you, they shew themselves to be honest men. Ask it, also, whether there must not be some very important meaning in these most solemn words, 'Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,' whereby Christ hath commanded all Christians to be admitted into his church; and whether there is not both meaning and truth in these, that Christ 'died for all men.' And then ask it, what sort of Christian teachers they are, who treat them as gibberish, by a total silence, or as subjects whereon they cannot speak without discovering themselves to their hearers to be infidels and tricksters. Is he a Christian teacher, who either will not, or dare not, enforce, or even speak, the words of Christ to a Christian congregation? or, who seeks subsistence from you for thus dealing by you?

Having thus laboured to set you on your guard against the false prophets and teachers of the times, let me now, in a few words, warn each of you to beware of a yet more dangerous deceiver, your own corrupted heart, by which your enfeebled understanding is too often biassed. All the cunning and wicked powers of earth and hell can never endanger your salvation, if you do not join them against yourself. If God is for you, who can stand against you? And most infallibly he will for ever be for you, unless you first forsake him and his word. He will not force your faith or obedience; but he will send his Holy Spirit so to assist you, as fully to counterbalance your natural inclination to disbelief and sin, that you may become as free to choose good or evil, as Adam was before he fell. In a word, his strength 'will be sufficient for you.' Watch, watch, watch over yourself, over your every thought, word, and action. Read, meditate, pray, and you will believe. Believe, and you will obey. Have God always in your thought. Have his final judgment always in your eyes, more especially in time of temptation. 'Be temperate in all things, and keep the body under.' Know, that God is just, and fear to offend him. Know, that he is merciful, and will forgive you for Christ's sake, if you truly repent, and forsake your sins. Study your-

self, and beware of yourself, as your most deadly enemy, as that single enemy, who can undo you. As the devil tempted Christ by texts of Scripture, his artful agents, of whom you have sufficient warning in those Scriptures, will even tempt you by misapplied texts. Answer them, as Christ did, by plainer texts, and stay not to argue with them upon interpretations, wherein they will be too cunning for you, and impious enough to wrest the meaning of every passage against their own judgment; for so they can impose on your simplicity, they disregard all other consequences. The devil could not hide himself from Christ, nor does it appear, that he so much as attempted it; for, as if he had been the real god of this world, he offered him all its power and glory. But they who will set themselves to practise on your weakness, must carefully conceal the blackness of their designs, in the darkness they attempt to throw on you, lest they should give you an alarm, and put you on your guard. They will therefore come to you in sheep's clothing, speaking soft words through lips that cover their teeth. But if you look attentively, you may see their feet and tail. Again, I say, 'watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.' But if you do enter, redouble your vigilance, cry mightily to the God of your salvation for help, and fly out of the net as fast as you can. Loiter not, for death eternal is there. As to quoting Scripture, this may be done by your common sense to much better purpose, than by the very little stock of learning the false prophets are masters of, mixed, as it always is, with ten times as much vanity and bad intentions; because you look for nothing in your Bibles, but necessary and saving truths, which there stand forth in lights too clear to be misunderstood by such inquirers. The holy Scriptures were written for you, preferably to all the rest of mankind, preferably, I am sure, to such men as wish to deceive themselves and their hearers. 'Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. That you may be able to stand in the evil day; and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above

all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance.' Thus ought the Christian soldier to be prepared to 'fight the good fight of faith' under the 'banner of Christ, the captain of his salvation,' against the approaching enemy, of whom the watchman gives these warnings. The same trumpet, blown by Christ and his apostles, when the false prophets of old attacked the true religion, must now again be set to the mouths of their faithful followers.

To conclude, every day, more especially the Lord's day, and some time before and after receiving the Lord's supper, ask these questions of yourself, and take the answers from your own common sense and conscience:

Do I know Christ, and his religion?

Is my being to last for ever in extreme happiness or misery?

Is it better for me to be in heaven or hell?

Which is the way to heaven?

Which is the way to hell?

Who can shew me both?

Which master should I serve, God or the devil?

Which of the two does my conscience tell me I am serving? and in which of the ways am I going?

If a rich man should offer me my choice of a guinea and a shilling, which would I choose?

And have I common sense for a matter of little value, and not for God, for my soul, for heaven, and for eternity?

Shall I not then go back to the fuller, though short catechism, proposed to me in this Appeal, and give my whole head and heart to it?

'Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.'

After finishing as well as I was able, the foregoing little work, it may (and I wish it may) be observed, that I have

appealed therein to common sense, not only as it is found in plain unlearned people, but also to so much of it as the pride of philosophy or human refinements hath left still remaining in those who value themselves on the more uncommon degrees of invention, penetration, and knowledge. It is common sense, which is but another expression for reason, whereby a plain man is distinguished from a beast; and sure it is, if the philosopher or refiner, particularly as to religion, whereof God is undoubtedly the sole teacher, loses sight of common sense, he sinks himself below the rank of plain men, and degenerates into a beast. If he therefore should vouchsafe to read my Appeal, let him consider it as an attempt (howsoever weak he may judge it) to lead him into a more masterly way of thinking in the same track.

SEQUEL TO THE APPEAL.

1 John ii. 16, 17.

All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.—And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof.

In the foregoing Appeal the reader hath seen, that lust, or desire of fleshly pleasure, was that appetite, and pride that passion, into which the enemy of God and man tempted our first parents, and whereby he persuaded them to believe and trust in himself, and to a disbelief in, and rebellion against, God; and whereby he hath led us all, more or less grievously, into the same sins, and into all our other transgressions and crimes. Not thinking it proper in the course of that work to dwell as largely on those two dreadful subjects, and their effects, as your concern in them required, I shall here endeavour to lay before you a few considerations on each of those shockingly important corruptions, to awaken you to a right sense of your danger, or rather certain destruction, in laying your hearts open to their allurements.

And first, as to the lust of the flesh and of the eyes, you see in the words of the Holy Spirit, above quoted, that it is not of the Father, but of the world. No; from your heavenly Father, and from your God, nothing can proceed, and nothing can by him be approved, but that which is innocent and pure, that which is holy and good. It is true, the mere animal part of your nature, which you partake with the beast, which perisheth, is his work, as well as your souls, which you have in common with his immortal angels. But your brutal part hath been so perverted and corrupted by the devil, since you left the hands of your Creator, that although you may gratify it in a certain degree, made naturally necessary to every man who sojourns in this world, yet there is no going beyond the bounds of this degree without sin; and though that sin may, at first, not be of the most heinous kind, it is, however, then hard for the poor weak creature,

man, to stop; nor can he, at all, assure himself that he shall not rush forward to crimes of the deepest die. Now, under the government of his brutal flesh, his covetous eye, and the artful devil, he hath no power in himself to return; nor shall he ever return, if the rod of his Father do not whip him back into the sheepfold of moderation, by remorse and misery, ten times greater than all the pleasure he tasted in sin.

What, however, is the pleasure of sin, though without remorse or affliction to balance it? Filthy in itself, shared with the swine, and of no continuance; pursued, perhaps, at great expense of fortune, labour, trouble, and probably at the risk of character, health, and life itself. This is the true account of every pleasure in excess; that is, every pleasure not justified by our religion.

But then remorse and affliction must follow it, as surely as your shadow follows your body in the sunshine. You are but a traveller and pilgrim in this world, and must pay your overcharged bill at every inn for whatsoever you have called for. The passage from pain to pleasure is not more joyous, than the passage from pleasure to pain is grievous. Lay your account for this scourge as the very best thing you can, in your circumstances, desire, and pray for it; because, should your Father give you over to yourself, and not force you back by correction, your jaunt of pleasure must end in hell. In that horrible place, with your seducer for your tormentor, you will feel your own folly in trusting the father of lies, rather than the God of truth, as Eve did, to govern your course of life through your short journey in the former world. You chose to be a beast, a swine, a wolf, a serpent, rather than a man; and God, giving you up to your own freedom of choice, hath suffered you to become a devil. Then this doctrine here repeated to you, than which there is none that the religion of Christ utters with a louder voice, shall most wofully upbraid you with its neglected truth. You yourself, in flames, must confess this, and justify your Judge in the severity of your punishment.

Indeed, had the true religion been less alarmingly express on the subject, you could not have hoped, that a soul, so drenched in pollution, in that iniquity and oppression, which fed your appetite of pleasure, could ever enter into the presence of God, or make one in a company of angels.

Even nature, corrupt as it is, and reason howsoever enfeebled, start back at the thought, and open an impassable gulph between Abraham and you. Like to like must make the great rule of society in every world. Lambs and tigers must no where be mixed. Much less must angels and devils have the same place of abode. The good Christian, in this life of trial, takes all the care he can, not only 'to do justice, to walk humbly with his God, to keep himself unspotted from the world,' and from such pleasures as are 'sensual and devilish;' but to improve his heart and soul in high and heavenly meditations; to transport them in psalms, hymns, and acts of the most ardent devotion; to study with a deep attention the infinite proofs of goodness, which his Father, Saviour, and Comforter have afforded him, and then to dissolve like wax before this fire, in gratitude and love towards God, and in charity towards the human image of God; this it is, to go upward through Christ, 'the way.' This is is, to be like God, and this is the soul, thus trained, thus accustomed, thus exercised, which is dear to God, that can never possibly be separated from God, with such as these, and none but such as these, the regions above are peopled; and from these resounds, throughout the universe, 'the song of Moses and the Lamb, great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.'

What I have just said leads us directly to the consideration of our nature as compounded of a soul and body; of these the former, before our fall into corruption and sin, had power to govern the latter; but that corruption no sooner took place in us, than the body with its appetites and passions, that is, the brutal nature in man, began to rebel against our souls or our angelic nature. Hence it is, that 'the spirit lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit, and these two are so contrary the one to the other,' that peace can never be recovered, but in a conquest obtained by the spirit. When the spirit, assisted by religion, by a strict temperance in all things, and at all times, and sometimes by fasting and other acts of mortification, recommended to us by Christianity, hath obtained this victory, the whole man then, and not till then, becomes a good Christian. Then he hath reason to build on the promises of God,

that, if he continues, 'through the spirit to mortify the deeds of the body, he shall live in' the spirit alone, and live for ever. But should the flesh overcome the spirit, the whole man is undone to all eternity. Feed not your flesh then, for as it rises, the spirit sinks; but 'deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Christ.' Suffer not a moment of sensual pleasure to pass upon you for happiness, which cannot possibly be found in this place and state of trial. No, the way to it 'is above to the wise;' and it is in fleshly pleasure, as in a bait, that your enemy hides his hook.

In the second place, the pride of life is not of the Father, but of the world. Pride, we know, had a father, but that father was the devil, who, too proud for obedience in heaven, where it was so infinitely sweet and honourable, as the first and greatest fool broke out into rebellion against the Almighty. Infinite goodness poured upon him in a measure, far above all human comprehension, instead of binding him in the golden chains of gratitude, served only to swell him with haughtiness. It was in vain to say to him, as the Holy Spirit saith to each of us, under the temptations of this rebel, 'Who hath made thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou didst not receive it?' And what great matter is it that you, a man, have received? Why, a weak body, and a weaker mind; at most, a very little knowledge, only just enough to distinguish you from a beast; a little strength, a little beauty, a little worldly substance; all begged, borrowed, stolen, or plundered from one weaker or more stupid than yourself; at best but lent you by Providence for a very short space of time, to be repaid and accounted for to a master, on whom your low cunning cannot impose. There is surely no room to glory in that, whereof another man, and he after all but a sorry sort of man, possesses ten times more than you. Your troubles, your sicknesses, your death, but above all, your follies, your sins, your conscience, are more than enough to keep down your vanity, and humble you to your original dust. What a number of vermin crawl upon your skin, if you are not careful perpetually to wash off the natural filth which it throws out! What a variety of worms burrow in your bowels, and bore their way to your death, like butchers,

to prepare you for others in the grave at last! The poet finely says,

> These little epicures have kings
> To swell their bill of fare.

And now we speak of kings, if there is any dead prince or lord, laid out in state near your place of abode, let me beg you would go and look at him. That you should, is the very thing his haughty relations wish for, that you may stupidly admire his greatness and theirs. But I would send you thither for a very different purpose. If there is some degree of fierceness in his countenance, it is only the work of death. Fear him not now. His power to hurt or oppress is at an end. Look steadily at him, and remember, that is the thing, which a few days ago, lived in a palace, rolled about in a gilded coach, was attended by a number of servants in splendid liveries, and blown up to a monstrous size by as many flatterers. That is the thing, out of whose way, in the streets or on the high road, you fled like a frightened hare, lest his horses and carriage should crush you to death as a mere worm. And what is he now? Let your eyes and nose tell you, that all in him you so feared, envied, admired, now differs not from the dirt on your shoe, but in a much more offensive smell, which all the perfumes, wherewith he is surrounded, cannot sufficiently qualify.

Do not ask, why I recommend this sight to you? Such as he is, such must you be in a little time. His great physicians and all his fees could not save him from this condition, in which you see him. You cannot reasonably hope for more, or even so much, from yours. Humility is the happy effect I would produce in you by this sight. If he forgot, that he had nothing which he did not receive, he was a fool; but you must be a greater fool if, with so few, and so small things as you have received, you should be puffed up like him, so as to forget the God who gave them to you, and the death that shall take them from you. What then is that pride of life, which is not of the Father, but of the world, to you? It is but the air that swells a bladder, without making it really larger than it is in itself. Neither the dead prince, nor you, nor any man in this world, ever possessed the smallest matter of his own. Your soul, your body, your life, your very being, do not belong to you;

much less, your food, raiment, &c. All are lent you, and must be accounted for to God, the sole proprietor. With fear, trembling, and vigilance, therefore take care of the soul, body, and life, which your Maker hath intrusted you with. Put not on your clothes, till you have thanked God for them; and if they are new or fine, do not strut in them, for they are not your own. Do not eat or drink without thanking God for your food, nor value yourself, if you have it in plenty, on what you impart to your friends and the poor, for it is not your own. If you have more understanding, power, or piety, than your neighbour, child, or servant, wrap not your talents in a napkin, much less lay them out on your intemperance and pride in the service of the devil, but honestly and diligently trade on them for your master, as one that knows they are his, not yours.

God knew you too well to be trusted with much, and therefore hath lent you but a little. Your understanding is a poor weak thing. Your body is little and feeble. Your worldly means scanty. If these do not humble you, what do you think of your sins? You fear and tremble at the sense of these; how then can you be high-minded? How can you blush for your follies, and yet face the world with an assured countenance, and a stiff neck? If there is one lower in the world, as to any of the above particulars, do not swell on the comparison, nor set up to lord it over him; but rather consider, how many there are far above you in every respect; and that nevertheless, high as they are, if compared with you, they are but poor creatures, poor, foolish, mortal, if not wicked.

If many of them are proud and wicked, consider that 'not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called' into the service of God, and that of those who are, there are but few, who hear and obey the call. Consider too, that they 'shall perish for ever like their own dung.' The Lord hath gratified them in setting 'them in slippery places,' from whence they are soon cast down. Here for a while they make a pompous figure; and it is one of your most foolish and dangerous weaknesses, that you are too apt to envy that figure, and to wish you could shine away as they do. So far you are governed by the pride of life, and 'conformed to this world,' which, to-

gether with all its pomps and vanities, you solemnly vowed to renounce when you took a new name in Christ, and gave in that name to his church. It is not through the eye of faith you gaze at and admire the empty shew made by riches and pride in this world. No, you see this only with a carnal eye, that 'eye, which seeing seeth not.' However, if you have the least tincture of even worldly wisdom, if you have but a little common sense, do not aim at figure till you can afford it.

But in a lower degree, and at a cheaper rate, you think you may be a man of some figure. Lower degree! What is pride good for, if it can put up with this? Indeed it never can. A higher, and a higher degree must for ever be aimed at, for ever struggled for, till the highest is arrived at. Pride knows no bounds, can bear no inferiority. Cheaper! can that be cheap, for which the soul is paid, and heaven sold? As nothing in man is more pleasing to God than humility; so nothing is so odious to him as pride, because it was the first sin, the peculiar sin of the devil. 'A man's pride,' saith God, 'shall bring him low. Pride goeth before destruction. He that humbleth himself, shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself, shall be abased.' Yet you wish to rise in the eye of the world, not by true wisdom and good deeds, but by wealth howsoever acquired; by its appearance, when you have it not; and by the outward figure and fashion of a fool in the rank above you. Fashion! what can a Christian have to do with it, who is commanded 'not to be conformed to this world?' Do you not know, that 'the love of money is the root of all evil;' that fashion is the weed which springs from this root; that figure and flourish are its leaves; and death eternal its fruit? There is nothing so ridiculous, so contemptible in the eyes of this world's little grandees, as a poor man setting up for the fashion; nothing so hateful and despicable in the sight of God. Does not this sort of pride therefore go before a fall, as well here as hereafter? Yes, and the higher it is raised, the deeper is its fall into that pit, which hath no bottom. You know, 'God made you after his own image;' do not then suffer the devil to fashion you into an image of himself. Let me point out to you that wise ambition, which building, higher than Babel, even up to heaven,

digs deep in the rock of humility for a foundation. There is your abiding place, and there you may be truly great; but as to this lower 'world, it passeth away and the lust thereof.' There is indeed in this place of 'vanity and vexation' nothing that you should much desire, or value yourself upon, were it the will of Providence that you should obtain it, which it never can be, till that Providence, in its anger at your folly and pride, gives you up to yourself.

To conclude, what are you, enslaved to the lusts of the flesh and eyes, and the pride of life, but a foul dunghill, corrupted and bloated with both bodily and spiritual stench, wherein every thing abominable and poisonous is hatched and fed, satyrs, hydras, gorgons, chimeras, dragons, griffins, goblins, crawling throughout your wild imagination, your dissolute heart, your abandoned soul; and spreading infidelity, vice, death, and damnation, wherever they move. Can such a monster go to heaven?—No, even this world spues him out as a disgrace to the earth, into that sink where the stinking offscourings of the moral world, with all their maggots, are gathered. Labour therefore, in time, 'to purify yourself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to humble yourself under the mighty hand of God,' since you see what must inevitably be the end of the unclean and the proud. To this work may the God of all power and goodness open your eyes, and in this may he help you, for the sake of Christ Jesus.

SOME

THOUGHTS ON COMMON SENSE,

INTENDED FOR

THE MORE INTELLIGENT READER.

A GOOD many years ago, a pamphlet was published here in Ireland, and, I believe, in England also, entitled, An Appeal to the Common Sense of Christian People, with a very sensible preface, addressed to them as unlearned and (as the author every where calls them) common Christians, persuading them to read the Scriptures, and trust to their own interpretations, rather than to the refinements, as he calls them, deservedly enough in too many instances, of either divines or churches. They themselves may, and therefore ought to be, he insists with good reason, competent judges of all which the Scriptures require of them to believe or do. He proceeds however but a little way in this strain when he enters on the design of the pamphlet, until he aids his common Christians in the work of interpreting Scripture with the commentaries of the learned, as he always styles them, by artful strictures in favour of Arianism from the abettors of that heresy, whether a text is brought for its support, or one, always quoted against it, is instanced. The partisans of his opinion alone are honoured by him with the epithet of learned. The common Christians, unacquainted with the original languages, have no more than the insidious compliment of an appeal, as every where they are obliged to trust him, and his learned, with the sense of all passages alleged. It is hard to say, whether this juggle is a grosser imposition on common sense, or the common people; but this I am bold to say, that truth never was, never can be, taught by fallacies like this. It is said, the author was a clergyman of the established church. Whatever he was,

after the high compliment he makes to his common Christians, it is plain, he did not consider them as possessed of common sense. This they ought not to resent, since he hath evidently shewn himself void of common honesty, whereof common sense should surely be the basis. But, if he was indeed a clergyman of the church, established in Ireland, he hath undoubtedly ranked himself among the most atrocious villains of that kingdom.

Another Appeal to Common Sense, written by the Reverend Doctor Oswald, a clergyman of the church of Scotland, published, I believe, at least twenty years later than the former, merits a much higher, and I hope, a very opposite character. Here the master, as well in point of style, as matter, is justly admired in every paragraph. He follows throughout the whole work, and that *passibus æquis*, the same track of thinking with Reid, that most excellent Scottish writer, with a just title however to originality; but with this difference as to the drift of each work, that whereas Reid, for the far greater part of his performance on the senses, assumes the character of a philosopher, Oswald, in as ample measure, takes that of a divine, and only glances, in passing, on philosophical subjects. This admirable work I did not happen to see till a fortnight ago, when I was far gone in the 78th year of my life. If therefore I have, any where in these remarks, mistaken his system, or built injudiciously on that system (for on it with some reservations, I have built) the reader will, it is humbly hoped, neither greatly wonder, nor severely censure my well-intended endeavours. With this fine writer I agree in many things; in some I differ widely from him. Few authors deliver themselves more warmly in favour of Divine revelation, than he. He seems to have it at heart, but as useful only in recalling us from our irreligious refinements and deviations, to the exercise of our natural perceptions and power of judging in matters of religion. Were he and his readers to insist solely on this recall, they should have me so far unreservedly with them. But I cannot think, as he does, that our natural judgment, unassisted, is adequate to the discovery of true religion. Many parts of his Appeal deliver documents highly deistical; particularly, the third chapter of his sixth book sets out with such as flatly combat the necessity of a

revelation, such in short as Tindal would have gladly laid hold of among his artful quotations from several of our unwary divines. They did not, but, at this time of day, Doctor Oswald ought, to have seen the weakness of these assertions, and their glaring inconsistency with the very supposition of a revelation. If his great abilities compel us to think he saw either, what must we think of his sincerity, or of the contempt he entertained for his readers? There is nothing easier to be proved, than that man must have been, and was actually, taught, from the beginning, the knowledge of one only God, of his will, and of several other necessary things, which, without an actual revelation, he could not possibly have known, if the natural faculties of the first men were not both very different from, and greatly superior to, those of their posterity, which would have been equivalent to a revelation. Almost every where he cites the Scriptures with just veneration, excepting in two or three passages, which he so interprets with the infidels, in favour of his intuitive judgment on primary truths, as to make them deny the necessity, and even utility of Divine revelation. Herein he shews too little regard for the written word of God, which can never, by any fair appeal to common sense, be so understood as to treat its own utility at least with any degree of contempt.

The first passage is found in Deut. chap. xxxvi. from ver. 11 to 14 inclusive, where Moses tells the Israelites, in his last speech to them, that the commandment, or commandments, see ver. 10, which he had revealed to them from God, and written in his book of the law, 'need not then be sought from heaven,' or 'from beyond the sea,' inasmuch as it was 'then in their hearts and in their mouths;' and, if the Doctor pleases, seconded, as the law of God, by their own common sense, and hearts, inasmuch as they knew its rectitude, and had seen the miracles wrought in confirmation of its authority, whereof their lawgiver had just then reminded them.

Another passage insisted on by Tindal, and all our other infidels, for a like purpose with that of the Doctor, and indeed with more show of reason, is found in Rom. chap. i. and ver. 20, 'The invisible things of him (God) from the creation of the world are clearly seen (or proved) being

understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.' Here the apostle does not say, that the being and attributes of God had not been revealed to mankind, or that it was needless to reveal them, points directly contrary to the faith and doctrine of the apostle; no, he says, the heathen, 'when they knew God,' which I insist, was by an original revelation, and the apostle supports me therein, 1 Cor. i. 21, 'they glorified him not as God,' but fell into gross idolatry, notwithstanding their knowledge of him, and of his works, which were sufficient to keep up that knowledge, from whence he infers, 'they were inexcusable;' and I cannot help inferring, that they stood greatly in need of a new and ample revelation.

His last passage is cited, or rather referred to, from the second chapter of the same Epistle, where the apostle says, 'the Gentiles had not the law,' (by Moses) but were, in some sense, 'a law unto themselves,' and had another sort of law, the moral law, or the law of common sense, which consisted in distinguishing between good and evil actions, and which makes the chief part of the Jewish law. This however could not, in a strict sense of the word, be a law, till it was believed to be the will of some lawgiver, to whom they were to account for the observation of that distinction in their actions. But to what lawgiver did they hold themselves accountable? Was it to a Baal, a Jupiter, a Mars, a Venus, a Bacchus? To gods of their own invention, and favourable to their vices? Did our apostle approve of these gods, or of an accountability to them? By no means, for he asserts, chap. iii. ver. 23, that 'all have sinned,' Jews and Gentiles, and 'have come short of the glory of God.' Wherefore he calls them all, not only Gentiles, but 'Jews, to the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, through faith in his blood, that they may be justified,' not by either of the laws above-mentioned, or by the works of those laws, but by a very different law, 'the law of faith.' To this most gracious law Cornelius and many other Gentiles, guided by the Spirit of God, and by the law of common sense within their hearts, had recourse. To which recourse this good man in particular, on account of 'his prayers and alms,' while a Gentile, and in suspense about religion, was invited by a special revelation, as one who still wanted both that and

a Saviour. To these he was, in some measure, entitled, because he had made the best use he could of such lights, as, together with his natural common sense, had been previously afforded him. He saw the horrible errors of paganism, and the wickedness it was productive of; believed in the existence of a good God; and made his addresses to him both by prayer and such charitable actions, as he rightly judged must be pleasing to an infinitely gracious Being. This was precisely the sort of Gentile whom St. Paul styles 'a law to himself;' not but that every Gentile might, if he pleased, have been as good a man as he, had he lived as long on the verge of Christian light as Cornelius did.

Is it not somewhat strange, that the advocates of natural light, and its sufficiency for all the purposes of religion and morality, should, in their distress for arguments on its behalf from holy Scripture, forget John i. 9, spoken of 'Christ, the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world?' The Quakers, indeed, quote it for their light within, not well aware of the very next two verses; 'He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own (the Jews, who ought to have known him best), and his own received him not.' Verse 5, 'The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.' Matt. iv. 16, 'The people that sat in darkness, saw great light.' Here it is plain, that whatsoever degree of light, in regard to religion, mankind, not excepting the Jews themselves, had originally enjoyed by the nature God had given, they nevertheless sat in such religious darkness when Christ visited them, that the far greater number of them could not discern the light he offered them, through the prophecies applied to him, nor miracles he wrought, nor the excellence and necessity of the doctrines he preached to them. He was the fountain of reason, and the natural light of all men, which, when he came among us, was so extinguished, that few only had so far the use of it, as to comprehend the still brighter light which shone from his gospel. These texts so coincide with, and illustrate the doctrine of St. Paul, in the first and second chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, above referred to, as to leave no doubt concerning the sense of the apostle in those passages.

It grieves me, that I have been forced to defend Divine revelation against the charge of vilifying its own utility and authority, and against, at least, a seeming infidelity in a preacher of the gospel, whereof it appears to me, he cannot be acquitted but by an imputation on his understanding, which surely no favourer of his ought to take amiss, unless he will deny that Solomon had a thousand times the sense of Oswald, and yet was guilty of far greater stupidity in matters of religion. I shall not, however, ask leave of Dr. Oswald, or his admirers, to take party with the word of God, rather than with him. As to the three passages of Scripture, little more than barely touched here, either Oswald and Tindal must be given up, or the sacred volume resigned, as subversive of its own truth and authority. It could not come from God to tell mankind such truths as itself declares they perfectly knew before, or might as easily and perfectly know, as they do that the sun is above the horizon at noon day. Surely not the weakest of our divines hath gone more astray in his reasonings for the defence of Christian revelation, than the Doctor hath in this instance, though he condemns all their reasonings for that purpose in the lump, and not only theirs, but all possible reasonings in support of that cause, excepting his own. Does not this look a little like vanity? Or, rather, does it not look somewhat like an attack on Christ and his apostles; for they also frequently reason with us in defence of this revelation, and even of its necessity to the salvation of mankind? If God vouchsafes to reason with us, who ought to take his every dictate for an axiom, may we not reason with one another, as long as we take care to found all our reasonings on the plain and obvious sense of those dictates? That we should, appears to me to have been his original intention; because, otherwise, the decision of every controversy among Christians, supposing it of considerable consequence, must have continued a controversy to the end of the world, or required a new and special revelation to clear it up.

As I too have made an appeal to common sense, in regard to religious truths, I have set out with such an idea of it, as my reader and I can concur in; at least, such an idea as hath made me every where intelligible to him. Doctor Oswald, somewhere, candidly states it to himself as an ob-

jection, that he does not, in any part of his work, define the object of his appeal, and gives no other answer, than that his reader, if at all attentive to the purport of his appeal, cannot mistake the meaning in which he takes the two words, common sense, wherever he applies them. I confess this answer does not satisfy me, in regard, I insist, to his own use of them, and still less in regard to the general use of them, and to that power or faculty of the mind, to which, I think, all mankind ought to appeal, more especially in matters of religion. Is it not surprising, that a man of his acumen should not have perceived these two words to be a real and formal definition, or that there is no defining a particular definition. We may, indeed, be told what definition in general is, whether of a sentiment, or of the words made use of to signify that sentiment; we may hear a particular definition well defended, or solidly exposed as defective; or we may hear the sentiment otherwise defined. Not to proceed in the dark, this last is the very thing I would here supply, as well for the Doctor as for myself, and my reader, if I shall be honoured with a reader.

That common sense is not a description, but a definition, will evidently appear to any the most indifferent logician, as soon as he shall consider that the word sense signifies some particular sense, and that the particularity of that sense is peculiarly restrained to some certain sense, common to all rational beings. This cannot be any of the external senses, because a rational being may be destitute of any one external sense; nay, of them all, as a separate soul or angel.

What then is signified or defined by the words, common sense? Here, perhaps, I may be obliged to differ a little with the ingenious Doctor. I say, perhaps, and but a little, for he seems to differ somewhat with himself, and I would not willingly imitate him in this. He insists that common sense is fully sufficient to determine the judgment of every rational man on every primary religious truth which it may be necessary for him to hold; or, rather, that his common sense is precisely that judgment which, as a rational being, he is compelled to make on every necessary proposition, the instant he perfectly understands it; and here he sharply inveighs against philosophers and divines, for presuming to reason about points already decided by the judgment of

common sense; and the latter especially, to prove by reasoning such positions as are too plain to be proved. In this, if I mistake not, he ascribes too little or too much to common sense, I mean, in confining the office of judgment to the bare perception of the primary truths; and the rather, because he himself, afterward, very ably proves the truth of this proposition, 'there is a God,' from the works of creation, although he had assumed that proposition as primary in the highest sense of the word. To me it is plain, then, that he was conscious he had too much abridged the meaning of common sense; and in this consciousness I cannot help concurring with him, because sure I am, and sure he was too, that common sense not only dictates the primary truths, but is that alone in man which can decide on the rectitude, or error of our reasonings, deduced from those truths. Now, although those reasonings are too often erroneous, and still oftener so bewildered in long disquisitions, nay, and frequently in loose harangues, that all the good Doctor hath so elegantly censured in them, is most justly condemned by common sense, and yet more severely by their unhappy effects. And yet many of those reasonings which divines employ occasionally on religious subjects, are vouched by common sense, not only as rightly deduced, but as terminating in conclusions equally certain with the primary truths, and with the clearest logical deductions, so as fully to warrant subsequent conclusions, when as fairly deduced. An instance of this may be seen in the remarkable use of it made by a blind man, on whom our blessed Saviour bestowed the sense of seeing. When some of the learned Jews undertook to argue with him against the reality, and even possibility of the fact, because, as they reasoned, Christ could not have given the sense of seeing, being 'but a sinner, to their knowledge, and was come, they know not from whence,' and consequently not come from God, nor vested with so great a power; by way of an appeal to common sense, he answers, 'Why, here now is a marvellous thing, that ye know not whence he is,' nor whether he may not possess this power. As to me, 'I know that whereas I was blind, I now see;' two primary truths followed by another, tacitly formed—I know he is from God (but not openly expressed), 'because he hath opened mine eyes.' Now I agree with

you, that God heareth not sinners; 'but if any man is a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. If this man, therefore, were not of God, he could do nothing,' certainly nothing like what he hath done to me. His last conclusion was a firm faith in Christ. His adversaries argued, first from a false position, which they neither knew, nor could possibly know, to be true; and also from a maxim admitted by the new believer, but so as to draw from it a conclusion directly contrary to what they drew. The plain unlearned man lays down two positions of his own, and a third suggested by them, all supported by common sense, and under the sanction of common sense likewise, infers this truth, that he ought, as a rational creature, to believe in Christ; and a farther one, more practical in becoming the disciple of Christ, from whence, no doubt, he drew this as his last, that by so doing he should be saved.

The Scribes, Pharisees, and more learned Jews, were not able to reason, at least did not, reason as soundly as this poor beggar-man. But it must be observed, that he grounded his reasoning, not only on the principles expressly insisted on therein, but on faith in the existence of God; for he 'believed that God is,' Heb. xi. 6; and in the infinite power and goodness of God, which, as his opponents durst not dispute, he assumed as one of his data. Howsoever this poor man came by this first principle, this primary truth of all religion, it is by the Holy Spirit called an article of faith, and certainly was to him no other. Hence it is manifest, that some articles may be absolutely depended on, and serve as primary truths, or axioms, from which reason may draw conclusions of most unquestionable certainty. In commerce, in trials for life and death, &c., common sense and all mankind have agreed on this method of procedure, although with less immediate evidence to justify their so doing, than we have, or may have, for our reliance on articles of faith in the gospel. We should consider him as a fool, who, having spent all his days in this island, should at all doubt whether there is any where such a city as Paris or Rome; and yet for the actual existence of those cities he could have no possible evidence but that of faith; whereas, for the existence of God, his faith is aided by the whole system of creation; and for the truth of other subsequent articles of our reli-

gion, he hath, or may have, more and stronger proofs, both internal and external, to support this faith, than have ever been afforded to any other articles of belief.

The reader may now permit me to declare what I mean by that common sense to which I have appealed.

There are two different senses in which it hath been taken, both by others, and by Doctor Oswald himself; namely, the common sense of the heart, the *Sensus Communis* of Juvenal, or a common feeling, which that satirist says is rarely found in the great ones of the world; and this is no other than that moral sense, or benevolence of every man to every man, to which ought to be added, that love of rectitude in action towards all men, and abhorrence of the contrary, which are natural to all human beings, at least to all such as merit that appellation. This sense, now, when God is known as our Creator and Judge, but not before, becomes a law to us, considered as rational, as morally free, and as accountable agents.

The other, and that the more usual meaning of common sense, is the same with good sense, reason, or the human understanding, a power or faculty of judging, whereby the human creature, idiots and madmen excepted, is distinguished from brutes. To this must be considered, as inseparably inherent, the attribute of moral liberty, whereby a man becomes subject to laws, human and divine, and consequently accountable to God for his very thoughts, and to both God and mankind for the rectitude or obliquity of all his actions. Here is my definition of common sense, which includes not only our perception of first principles, or primary truths, but our rational conclusions, or deductions, drawn from those principles, whether of the heart or understanding, and whether inculcated by uncorrupted nature, or by revelation fairly interpreted.

This faculty or power, as it is found in plain illiterate people, hath been called Crassa Minerva, mother wit, and common sense, in contradistinction, as it were, to the same faculty in people of higher education and culture, among whom it goes by the pompous names of learning and philosophy. However, as to its religious use, the lower classes of mankind generally so neglect it, as to live in too great a measure without it; and the higher pervert or despise

it. Yet neither can be wise or happy, but in the exercise of it.

It is in vain to say, man was born with the use or exercise of this faculty. Common sense itself and common observation deny the fact, but acknowledge the faculty itself to be an essential ingredient in the nature of man, idiots and madmen excepted. In it indeed consists the essence of man, though its use and exercise are developed by degrees in each individual, as he approaches to maturity, and stands in need of its assistance, or becomes a moral and accountable creature. Hence it is, that man may be justly compared to a candle, made at his birth with the materials of religious and moral light, but not yet luminous, till he is lighted up by instruction; nor does he in a moment break out into full lustre, but kindles, and gradually increases more and more in the effusion of this distinctive light, till he arrives at the perfection of a rational being, when he is qualified to propagate his light by illuminating and kindling it up in others. In this manner it is, that he becomes both a recipient and a secondary source of common sense, at least of its use, and of divine instruction, to others. Here it is to be carefully observed, that the common sense of any man does not enable him to be the inventor and dictator of religion. This is the office of God alone; and common sense itself disclaims the presumption of assuming this office; and confining itself solely to that of judging, and of assenting to, or dissenting from, the religious informations or institutions offered, unless when it is certain, they come mediately, or immediately, from God; in which case common sense hath nothing to do, but to believe and act, as he requires.

It is farther to be observed, that the faculty of common sense, given to all men, is not given equally to all. We are as larger or lesser candles even by our natural make, and still more differenced from one another by the more plentiful or scanty instructions afforded to various individuals. The good God, however, will undoubtedly proportion his requisitions to his own dispensations. He will by no means expect as much from the man who receives five talents from his hands, as from him, to whom he hath intrusted ten. For good and wise reasons of his own he 'divides these severally

as he will,' but to every one sufficient for the accomplishment of the purposes he hath in view, whereof common sense never presumes to judge, but always thinks itself charged, at least, to the full amount of its abilities, and each man is much more apt to inflame this charge against himself, than to mitigate it by humility.

Some time after I had thrown these thoughts together, I met with an extraordinary performance, written by the Reverend Doctor Fletcher, of Madely, in England. This gentleman, a foreigner, but a master of the English language, is an itinerant preacher among the Methodists. His imagination is fully equal to that of Mr. Hervey, whom he greatly excels in judgment and correctness. The title of his book is ' An Appeal to Reason and Common Sense ;' wherein the corruption and depravity of mankind are by observation, experience, and innumerable passages of Scripture, well applied, painted in such colours as leave the attentive reader, not only humbled, but so terrified, as to stand in need of all the consolation he supplies, in the latter part of the work, from the mercies of God, and the merits of our Redeemer, warranted to faith and repentance in the holy Scriptures, and adduced by the writer in a manner fully satisfactory to common sense and reason. The blemish (and in my opinion no small one it is) of this work, consists in an attempt to prove, that the souls of all mankind are *ex traduce;* that is, that when a man begets the bodies, he also begets the souls, of his children, and this his position, he endeavours to support by Scripture. The very ingenious and entertaining Mr. Jennings, in a late essay, asserts that the souls of all men pre-existed before they were conceived or born. Both wild and dangerous opinions, and both, long ago, exploded. Neither of them, however, can be fathomed by reason or common sense ; nor is either of them ascertained by revelation ; and therefore with neither of them hath a Christian, or indeed a philosopher, any thing to do. Vanity alone dictates such subjects as these to petulance and presumption. ' They are as high as heaven ; what can we do' in such matters ? ' deeper than hell, what can we know?' There are men who think nothing too high or deep for them, who looking for fame and glory by speaking in the clouds,

and hoping that we below should take it all for thunder, with Hotspur, think

> It were an easy leap
> To pluck bright honour from the pale faced moon,
> Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
> Where fathom line could never touch the ground,
> And pluck up drowned honour by the locks.—SHAKSPEARE.

Readers in their senses take these for the lunatics of science, and wish they would swagger on any other subjects, than those of religion. In how just a light were they set by captain ———, who, in a parallel case, took upon him both to do and know! He told a large company, that in passing mount Cenis, he found himself among the stars, and that he plucked and eat one of them; being asked how it tasted? answered, upon his honour, very like a Carlingford oyster. Shall we not class the more serious metaphysical ranters, the propagators of souls, the Pre-existents, the Transmigrators, the Arians, the Materialists, the Fatalists, the Astrologers, with this facetious taster of stars, and with him who may hereafter eat another, and swear it tasted exactly like a turnip, though a wise polemic folio should be published on each side of the palatical controversy?

The famous bishop Wilkins, of high metaphysical and mechanical memory, employed his thoughts, during no small part of his life, on the invention of wings, instead of lawn sleeves, to waft him through the air in the manner of a kite, but so failed in his attempt, as never to make half so high a flight as his cousin Oliver Cromwell had done, though it was a common declaration of his, that he hoped to see the day when it should be as usual for a man to call for his wings, as it was then for his boots. How happy must he have been, had he lived till now, when the balloon, in a way of daily improvement, promises soon to carry up whole companies of ladies and gentlemen, to dine on a dish of stars, with stewed moons, for cockle sauce! Yes, and how happy should I be, could I but laugh my fellow-caterpillars out of their notions of soaring before they become butterflies! The sneers of Elijah and Isaiah at idolatry were of force, not inferior to their gravest admonitions, and menaces. If the pigmies of former ages have been bantered out of their attempts to pull

fruits, placed fifty feet higher than themselves, should we not rather ridicule our contemporary dwarfs, on tiptoes, reaching at the same fruits, than seriously endeavour to convince them, that they are not of sufficient stature? that the giant geniuses of old were not tall enough for the purpose? and that some of those very fruits themselves, shook down by the winds of false or fanciful doctrines, have been found poisonous, instead of nutritive? To maintain any degree of gravity in censuring such sort of writers, is, both as to matter and manner, to answer a fool according to his folly, and become like unto himself, in this case, the most consummate of all fools, on account of the solemnity, perhaps ingenious, but not for that reason less ridiculous.

It is a great many years since the astronomical song of Tom o'Bedlam was set by Purcel, I believe, to the music of the spheres, too loud, as some very eminent philosophers averred, to be heard, no doubt, just as the sun is too visible to be seen. Tom was an enthusiast in astronomical philosophy; and as all enthusiasts do at last, be their subjects ever so high or sacred, grow into such a familiarity with them, as borders on contempt, so did Tom. The song was this:—

I.

I'll mount upon the dog star,
And there pursue the morning;
I'll chase the moon till it be noon,
And make her leave her horning.

II.

I'll scand the icy mountains
To shun all female gypsies;
I'll play at bowls with sun and moon,
And scare them with eclipses.

III.

The stars, pull'd from their orbs too,
I'll cram them in my budget,
And if I'm not a roaring boy,
I'll leave the world to judge it.

The two first lines of the second stanza furnish the bucks with a very prudent hint; and the two last of that stanza exceed in sublimity every thing that Longinus hath been able to collect from his celebrated Greek poets. However, whatever comes of Tom as a poet, his name ought to stand as the common title of all philosophers, Reid only excepted,

so that common sense should never call them by any other appellation, than that of Tomists.

The wife of the famous Doctor Halley, a woman of very common sense, like Juno, took it into her head to be jealous of an intrigue between her husband and some of the stars, and the rather, as more than one of them had previously lost their characters among the lampooning poets, because the doctor often forsook his bed to go out and ogle those luminaries. At them, therefore, she took such mortal offence, that she was often heard, especially by night, articulately caterwauling, my curse, and —— curse on the stars. However distant the telescopical addresses of the doctor were to the objects of his amours, Mrs. Halley and the rest of her sex had a right at least to brand them with the name of unnatural philosophy.

It is not my meaning to censure all speculation, and every degree of it, on every subject. Our Maker hath extended the intellect of man to somewhat more of knowledge than is absolutely necessary to his present subsistence, most probably because he intended him for a wider and higher field of enjoyment, than the present, and because even here he hath opened to his understanding, and even senses, a view of scenes, which invite him to a contemplation of things, far above food and raiment. However, it is found by experience, that our range of knowledge is circumscribed by a circle, not a great deal wider, than that of utility. Our speculations therefore, howsoever bounded, should be regulated by use and capacity; and common sense ought ever to be the basis of all our inquiries. It is only vanity and ignorance of ourselves which, at any time, prompt us to attempt excursions beyond these. It is true, one man can leap farther than another, but not much; he is not, however, on this account to imagine he can fly. If one philosopher, for instance, should take upon him to maintain there is no such thing in nature as frost, cold being only, in his opinion, an absence of heat, though he himself applies to a clothier and tailor for a warmer coat in winter, common sense will laugh at the conceit, howsoever plausibly supported by arguments. If another should insist, there is no heat in the fire, a little girl of common sense, hearing him (as once happened) and seeing him standing with his back to the fire, with his hands

clasped behind, might refute him by stealing a bright coal into one of them, whilst he was intent on his philosophical lecture. If a third should assert, that no two parts or particles of matter ever were, or could be, in immediate contact with each other, and should even bring some inextricable arguments in proof of his assertion, common sense might be provoked to try the force of those arguments by smartly tweaking the nose of that philosopher. A fourth, a great divine, and a preacher of righteousness, goes still farther, and proves, at least to his own satisfaction, that no man or woman ever did, ever could, do any one thing, good, bad, or indifferent, in any other sense, than as a hand-saw or hatchet is said to sever the parts of a piece of timber. Let common sense beware of these two last philosophers, and take care of itself. Nay, let religion, morality, and law, look about them, for if there is no liberty, there must be no punishment; if there is no contact, there can be no theft, no battery, no murder—no tithes for the clergy, no fees for the lawyers—no judgment to come, no heaven, no hell. One of the most eminent of all our modern philosophers, to the entire satisfaction, for some time, of almost all his learned readers, proved that all space is perfectly filled with matter, so as not to leave the smallest interstice between the parts of that matter. This system hath still its fautors, who laugh at such as object, that a plenum would leave no room for motion. Here all is an immense mass of solid impenetrable matter, an immeasurable atom! One, hardly less eminent, maintains, that our earth was formerly a part of the sun, struck off by a comet, and left here to cool and circulate about its still luminous constituent. A bishop, not eighty years ago, published a book to prove, there is no such thing as matter in the universe; and no one, that I heard of, was able to answer it otherwise, than by the testimony of his sight and feeling. Here is infinite room for motion, but nothing to move in it. Another, now alive, hath published it as his system of philosophy, that there is nothing in the universe but matter. With or without the leave of this right reverend machine, I shall venture to think (poorly I confess) as my reader, if he can think, may perceive. This my assurance, built on the basis of common sense, leaves me in no sort of pain about any thing that uncommon sense may

learnedly urge to prove my mistake, although his lordship should call me a fool for concurring herein with the first bishop.

In answer to the former prelate, I dined yesterday on something more tangible, palpable, and manducable, than ideas; and in answer to the latter, I think, judge, and choose, to move this way or that, as I please, not one of which things can matter do. Thus from both I take shelter in common sense and the word of God. He that says, God may superadd a power of thinking to a certain organization of matter, merely as matter, since he calls in Almighty power, might as rationally maintain, that the same power is as able to superadd a faculty of thinking, judging, choosing, and moving itself, to unorganized matter, a tree, for instance, or a stone, while the one is still but a stone, and the other but a tree. Should we see a large stone, of itself, for a considerable time, regularly moving, and carefully avoiding the fire and the sledge, on a supposition, that it were destitute of every sense and of the faculty of thinking, we should be apt to agree with Epicurus, that it happened more by good luck than good guiding; or we should ascribe the phenomenon to some immaterial and imperceptible cause, never to a stone itself, as a stone. In the name of wonder! where would the philosophers lead us? By one set of them a rational being is not allowed so much as a single soul, while by another, every particle of matter, every globule of light, if in motion, as the necessary cause at least of its continuation and direction in motion, is allowed a distinct soul of its own. What! give a soul to a hand-ball, or a shuttlecock, and refuse it to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Socrates, Paschal, Newton, the greatest philosophers! Whatever the saints may do, not one of the poets, except Lucretius, will subscribe to this inanimate system. All of them, to a man, Poligniac only excepted, will insist, and surely with good reason, on the necessity of a soul (some sort of a soul) even in a brute. By these remarks on the gross absurdities of different philosophers, we may easily perceive how little dependence we can have on philosophy in general. It is a battery erected by petulance and conceit against religion; but at such a distance, with guns so ill pointed, and with such a lack of ammunition, that its balls never go home,

excepting in the opinion of those who gladly take sound for sense and weight, setting up a stupid huzza at every impotent explosion.

It is little more than a century since days, nights, seasons, years, heat, light, and I know not how many other things of great consequence, were all brought about by a subtile matter. This most ingenious system was driven off the philosophical stage, and fairly too, by attraction, although what attraction was hath never been known, nor is it knowable, notwithstanding that all agree it brings every thing about in a very handsome manner. Fixed air, however, hath now taken cohesion out of its hands, which besides, is growing into a universal remedy. Nay the present mode of philosophy depends wholly on matter and motion, fixed air, and phlogiston. How the elements go to rack in the hands of these people! How the natural world every ten or twenty years, like a French bean, comes out a new thing! How nature herself conspires with our senses to impose on us! What a cheat, what a lie, is the whole universe!

The world, under philosophical management, from wonderful is become romantic. The man of common sense, whether literate or illiterate, after perusing the works of philosophers, hardly knows it to be the same world, till his senses and his reason extricate him from the fanciful and artificial wilderness, which he had lately gazed upon through false optics. Common sense never looks through spectacles. Under the direction of this and experience the farmer soon becomes acquainted with the seasons of sowing and reaping, soon becomes an almanack to himself; eats, drinks, sleeps, &c. without troubling himself with the planets, with subtile matter, or attraction. In hot weather courts the cooling breeze, and in cold weather warms himself at the fire, just as if cold and heat were realities; and leaves the causes of these things to the first Cause. To this he prays, and in this he confides. At sea he does more, for there he trusts also to the steersman and the sailors.

The philosophers make as wild work in what they call morality, which they have converted into an art, instead of a science. Every one of them gives it a standard and basis from the vanity and fertility of his imagination, as if it had none of its own. In my own time, one celebrated writer

asserts, it is grounded entirely on truth in action; another, on fitness of things; another, on beauty and deformity; another, on sympathy; all more or less foreign to the purpose, to which they are, at best, but circumstantial, and very inconsistent among themselves. Every conceited writer on the subject thinks himself lost to literary fame, if he cannot come forth with a new system and standard of his own. The true standard, which is one, is all this time carefully avoided, lest any honour should be done to religion, wherein, without controversy, consists the very essence and ground of morality. Angels and men are moral agents only as they are intelligent, and free to do good or evil, and, in consequence, accountable to the great Judge for what they do.

As to religion, the vanity and petulance of philosophers, falsely here called divines, are authors of still greater confusion and absurdity. There is not a principle of it, that is not by them distorted or undermined; not a rule of action, that is not enfeebled or perverted. Mountains are heaped on mountains, that heaven may be scaled, and the Divine nature itself attacked. It is a sort of secondhand blasphemy to be particular in this place. There is not an invention of man in natural or moral philosophy, that is not converted into a horn to gore the sides of religion, insomuch that the philosophical tenet, absurd in itself, thus applied, becomes monstrous, portentous, pernicious, impious. Religion itself is seen only through the whims of fanciful or ill-disposed refiners. Hence every thing becomes credible, but truth and real religion. Hence it is evident, that the Lord hath sent among the people of these times 'strong delusion, that they all should believe a lie, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness,' as he did among the prophets of Ahab, because he delighted in lies, and could not bear the truth. Hence the present enormous torrent of profanation and wickedness; hence faction and rebellion; hence an infamous market of all things sacred; hence a spirit of horrible infatuation; and hence approaching destruction to church and state. But I write these things to a clergy and people, fast asleep on the very brink of ruin. This will not be read, or if it should, will be contemned.

Introduce a man of common sense into this extravagant medley of opinions made in the material world, in morality,

and religion; make him read, and then ask him his sentiments. His answer will be, that he finds himself in Bedlam.

Introduce a conceited speculatist to the same scene, and he infallibly becomes a sceptic, and soon after an Atheist; for, beholding nature, man, and religion, only through the medium of philosophy, to which he hath a congenial propensity, he feels himself battered, this way and that, by opinions plausibly defended; and instantly doubts of every thing, loses his senses, and emerges a speculative madman. Reid, Beattie, Oswald, &c., in my opinion, should have let Hume alone. His scepticism is the strongest refutation, and the severest satire on philosophy, whether in or out of the church, that ever was, or ever shall be, published. For my own part, I believe he did but pretend to be a sceptic. The man eat, drank, put on and off his clothes, like other men; and, as an historian, was so notorious a matter-of-fact man, that I cannot take him for any thing else than barely an enemy to all religion in the mask of scepticism. Secretly stung by one religion, he could find no relief in any other; and therefore wrote himself into a faint disbelief of all; I say faint, because, as a sceptic, he even professed a doubt of religion, and therefore could not have been a firm disbeliever. The man had a sort of sense, which forces me to think him a sort of Christian; but his infinite vanity was too strong for his little faith. His case, on this supposition, was far from being singular.

At all this, common sense is sometimes set agape; yet still soberly goes on to plough, sow, eat, drink, sleep, wear clothes, &c.; nay, and to provide for futurity in even more important regards, just as if the high-flying speculatists had done nothing, all this time, but talk nonsense; just as if the world were neither more nor less than what it was five thousand years ago.

It is certain such writers as I have been speaking of, will never recover their senses until they find the way to simplify their ideas of religion and philosophy. At present, every little sciolist, prompted by his own vanity, sets up for a Paschal or a Newton, as every weed in a grove aspires to be a tree. What but vanity, tempts the poor silly mortal to aim at subjects above all human capacity? At the best, what is human capacity? He that, with his hand, endea-

vours to grasp a globe of ten feet in diameter, does he so much as guess at either the magnitude of that globe, or the shortness of his own fingers ?

Imagination and invention are the talents of a poet. In the free exercise of these we indulge him almost to the verge of extravagance, but not beyond it. When he loses sight of common sense, we turn away our eyes, that we may lose sight of him. He is lost in subjects too sublime for him. Strength overstrained, as in Statius, appears to be less; but somewhat restrained, as in Virgil, appears greater than it is. The poet that hath eagle's wings, should have eagle's eyes too. In this case the sensible reader justly admires his flights; and though furnished but with the wings of an ostrich, as I, for instance, tries sometimes to follow him, hopping, running, and mistaking a leap for a flight. The tragedy of Alexander the Great, written by a man going mad, is not much better received by good judges, than Hurlo Thrumbo, the work of a man stark mad.

But when imagination or invention, the poet's fort, invades the province of philosophy, there is then nothing to be found among the most bombastic rants of the poets or poetasters; nothing so foreign to reason, purpose, or use, as the outrageous eccentricities of philosophers, whereof I have given a few samples, out of a much greater number, which equally shock the sober reason of mankind. The poor poets, lodged in Bedlam, have not deviated farther from sound sense, with charcoal on the walls of their cells, than the grave philosophers, in their libraries, with pens on paper. Socrates saw this in his time, and set himself to correct it, not without some degree of success.

If among the present pretenders to philosophy, a single Christian is to be found, which I much doubt, I refer him to St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. for an excellent lesson of modesty and sobriety. No man knew better how to imbibe the purport of this lesson than Berkeley; and taking it for granted that he did, I understand his Dialogues on Matter as an irony, superior to any specimen of that figure in Swift. That most sensible man, with, I am told, a good stomach, certainly did not, at dinner-time, satisfy himself with the thin diet of ideas, nor refuse a more opulent see in the North, on account of the cold, because he took cold to be nothing more than an

idea. Be this as it may, I take the aforesaid Dialogues to be a most egregious banter on the ideal philosophy then in vogue.

Bacon did but attempt to bring back the class of natural philosophers to the experiments of the old simple people in the first ages of the world, from whom we have all the necessary or very useful arts, such as result from the properties of the elements; arts of agriculture, of spinning and weaving; of making saws, hatchets, augers; of discovering and applying medicines. The invention of these, and such like, must be ascribed either to revelation, or to experiments made by plain men, long before any thing was heard of in the world that durst assume the fastuous name of philosophy. The men who now plume themselves with this title, will by no means allow revelation to have had any hand in these discoveries, and therefore must grant that common sense, in the plainer part of mankind, hath far outgone their refinements, both as to ingenuity and utility; for what hath their philosophy to boast of, that it did not borrow? The fine arts you will say. Though I should give you these gratis, I must insist we could have done very well without them. You may say, you have improved them. In some sense it may be true that they have been improved, but not by philosophers surely; and it may be as truly said, particularly of music, that they have been debauched, debased. As to painting and sculpture, they came too early into the world, were the inventions of fools, and improved, before the rise of philosophy, by still greater fools, into such degrees of perfection, as later ages have not been able to arrive at. But both their inventors and improvers, however, were but artisans, not at all philosophers, ingenious fools indeed, who made gods for themselves.

If imagination and invention, requiring much regulation in poetry at the hand of common sense, are so foreign to philosophy, which pretends to build on cool reason alone, what must they be, or do, when intruding on religion? Can true religion have any other author than God? If it is his work, invention and refinement can have no place in it. As often as they have been admitted, they have perverted its truth, and undermined its authority. If the true religion was originally revealed to mankind, as undoubtedly it was;

and if 'the invisible things of God from the creation of the world were, or might have been, clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;' if mankind, 'when they knew God, glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations,' so that 'their foolish hearts were darkened,' and so that 'professing themselves wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image, made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things,' Rom. i.; and if 'after that in this wisdom of God,' laid clearly open in the works of creation, 'the world by its own vain wisdom' or philosophy, pretending to reason 'on the wisdom of God,' thus laid open, after all 'knew not God;' was it not agreeable to the goodness of God, that he should by some other method, such as the 'foolishness of preaching, save them that believe?' If mankind had forsaken the true and only God, and had vulgarly and poetically fallen to worship stocks, stones, birds, beasts, creeping things, devils, as gods; and if the more knowing part of them had philosophically fallen into fatalism, scepticism, Atheism, was it not high time that the infinitely gracious God should invert the course of Nature, so miserably misunderstood, and by prophecies, miracles, and what philosophers called 'the foolishness of preaching,' reduce the world to common sense in the great article of religion? When the infinite wisdom of God, speaking in the language of his creation, was no longer understood by his blind and foolish scholars, did it not become the mercy of the good Being to descend and speak to them in their own language, as to little babes, here called 'the foolishness of God,' 1 Cor. in comparison of the wisdom displayed in the works of creation? Should he have sent the Aristotles or Newtons to teach these babes religion in crabbed, high-flown, and mathematical terms? No; his Son came to speak to them in words which they understood, and sent a company of poor farmers and fishermen to instruct them in terms familiar to them. Yet, intelligible as the system of our religion is in itself, and simple as the language is wherein it is delivered, all other knowledge, in comparison of it, is low and trifling; all other language feeble, grovelling, and unaffecting. Closely translated into any other language, it loses nothing of its native beauty

or force, which lie in the sentiments, without borrowing any thing, but bare expression, from the dress or diction. This, with other proofs (and there are many), shew it to be the work of God himself. To speak, or, as in the Book of God, to write down to the meanest capacity, and yet so far above the most soaring flights of human genius, must argue the true divinity of the Author. This point, without here producing instances, I can safely submit to the candour of every able critic.

On this occasion, some Christians may wonder, and all infidels object, the many divisions among the professors of a religion so fully and clearly set forth to common sense, as I insist our religion is. There will be no great difficulty in removing both, if we candidly consider, that the cause of these divisions may be found in the great obliquity and diversity of human reasonings, governed, for the most part, by vanity, sensuality, corrupt affections, violent passions, and wild imaginations of mankind. In other branches of knowledge, far less interfering than religion with the animal part of our nature, as great, and almost as many differences have arisen. I have hinted at some in natural philosophy, where neither passion nor prejudice have so much as a pretence for intruding. In law and distributive justice, interest hath produced ten thousand times more, and given our best judges a world of trouble in the decision. In mathematics, whereof the professors assume a Papal authority of infallible demonstration, not only paradoxes and mysteries, but palpable contradictions have been maintained by different mathematicians, and sometimes by one and the same mathematician; for instance, the infinity of parts, as to numbers, into which a cubical inch of space or gold is divisible, cannot be exceeded by any number, and yet two cubical inches of space or gold is divisible into twice as many parts as one. Here are two propositions, both mathematically demonstrable, and yet flatly contradictory in terms and ideas. Perhaps I should not have selected this out of a good many in algebra, fluxions, and logarithms, had not the mathematicians taken upon them to deal so largely in infinites and infinitesimals. If numbers of pretended Christians maintain there are three Gods, this will not prove that the unity of God is not revealed in his word with sufficient precision.

If a still greater number of pretended Christians pray to absent creatures, and fall down before carved images, this will not make it at all doubtful whether this sort of adoration, and that sort of devotion, is not expressly forbidden by the sole object of all adoration and devotion. I might, with equal force, instance in every other fundamental point of controversy among those who hold the Bible to be the word of God, and our rule of faith.

What right however the infidel part of mankind can have to object our religious differences I cannot see, since the all-sufficiency, in regard to religion, of their boasted light of nature retains them as advocates for all sorts of religion, or compels them to be enemies to all. We have latitudinarians among ourselves, who insist, that the understandings of men are as various as their faces, that therefore every individual man must either have no religion, or an individual religion, and that our Maker is better pleased with variety than uniformity in religion; a thing impossible, nay, blasphemous, if there is really a true religion, or if any one religion is nearer to truth than another. The celebrated dictator, Montesquieu, hath laid it down as a rule, that religions ought to be various, or to speak more precisely, climatical; that is, that warm climates must have warm, and cool climates cool religions, no great matter with him whether true or false. Christianity, he thinks, may suit well enough with the Europeans, especially the Northern nations, where cool reason is most apt to prevail; but can never rightly obtain in the East and between the tropics, where a more enthusiastic system would be more welcome. Welcome, or not welcome, I take his topical determination to be very much amiss, as to the point of utility, the chief, or rather only thing to be here attended to; for if he thought religion to be of any use, he ought to have assigned us in this cold climate the warmest species of religion, and to the inhabitants of hot countries the very coldest he could think of, to balance the excess, both here and there, of our local dispositions. What shall we think of this modern oracle? Was he wholly unacquainted with Christianity? Or did he only affect an ignorance, suitable to his indifference about all religion? Had he been willing to own a knowledge of religion, he must have confessed, that our holy religion carries with it

causes of conviction and of animation, sufficient for the inhabitants of all countries from the equator to the pole, on either hand. Montesquieu thinks as a certain preacher in the Highlands of Scotland did, who in a very pathetic sermon assured his audience, that if they did not repent of their sins, the Lord, at the last day, would set them stark naked on the top of one of their highest mountains, and send a north-wind to blow on them, and freeze their very hearts to icicles. The preacher being reproved for this mode of punishment by one of his hearers on coming out of the kirk, who alleged that fire and brimstone should have been threatened; answered, I am not such a fool as to tell the Highlanders there is a great fire in hell, lest they should all run thither headlong. In this instance, climate alone was considered; but it must be confessed by both the Frenchman and the Scotchman, that, if in order to an easy reception of religion, accommodation to the tempers, humours, and prejudices, whether natural or national, of mankind, alone is to be the rule, no religion threatening punishments in any degree of severity, can expect to be easily received, especially in minds where corruption and wickedness, in any degree, have taken place; and yet here it is, that damnatory principles and penalties are most wanted. So the Scotch preacher thought, and surely Montesquieu, as a great lawyer, must in regard to civil society and its laws, have been of the same opinion; and why not in regard to the laws of God, common sense cannot see. Religion is always welcome to carry the hopes of men as high as it pleases by promises; but if it threatens proportionable punishments, it then becomes an arbitrary and dreadful religion, dictates only, as all infidels insist, a mere mercenary morality, and ought to be rejected. But in whatsoever kind or degree a man of one climate may constitutionally differ from a man of another climate, men of all climates are so nearly the same as to both civil and spiritual society, that punishments, as well as rewards, become absolutely and universally necessary. So is human nature constituted by its wise and gracious Author, that it can commodiously subsist, I mean, as to bodily health and life, either in the hottest or coldest parts of the habitable world; and such uniformity hath he given,

and hath even moral corruption left, to the human mind, that every system of laws, human or divine, especially that which is dictated by infinite wisdom and perfection, is undoubtedly well fitted to the purposes of mankind every where. It will, I believe, be very hard to refute this position even in a political sense. Monarchies, aristocracies, and republics have subsisted, and may very well subsist, in all sorts of climates. Heat and cold make no difference in the nature of civil government. When either government or religion is converted into a weathercock, and made to point this way or that, it is only the wind of human opinion, ever variable, that plays it round; in regard to the former, seldom, and in regard to the latter, never, to the advantage of mankind, for the true religion is certainly the oldest.

There is but one thing more, whereon, as a friend to common sense, I wish to dwell a little in this rhapsody, because I think much wrong is done to that, to religion, and morality, by the mathematicians, and some of our mathematical divines. Among these, upon an absurd opinion that nothing but mathematics and mathematical demonstration can generate certainty in the human intellect, attempts have been made to introduce that species of proof into matters, purely religious and moral. These wild attempts have been long ago deservedly ridiculed, and totally exploded, as altogether inapplicable to the purpose; although it is still maintained, and that by some able and sound divines, that religion and morality do not rest on as sure a foundation as mathematical knowledge. Nothing, say they, can force the human assent, but self-evidence and mathematical demonstration.

This is the point I would here controvert, because I cannot help thinking, there are other branches of knowledge, wherein self-evidence and demonstration, equally clear and certain, take place, and compel the assent of common sense and reason. Logic is one of these, whereon mathematical certainty, as one among other sorts of certainty, is forced to depend. Religion and morality, which are but two names for precisely one and the same thing, is another. Logic is the art of reasoning rightly on all subjects. Of this the

plain, illiterate man, as a rational being, is as perfect a master, as the schools could make him, on every point of knowledge which comes fairly within the verge of his capacity. Within this line, give him the primary and intuitive truths, draw your consequences logically; and for two or three steps of conclusion, that is, as far as he is any way concerned to proceed, you compel his assent, whatsoever his interests or prejudices may, on the other side, force him to object.

For instance I say, that which hath no being, cannot give being to any thing, therefore the world could not make or give being to itself; some other being therefore made the world. But the world is well and wisely made, therefore some being of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, that is, God, made the world. This now is moral proof or demonstration; and nothing in mathematics carries with it a stronger or more certain proof; nay, every mathematical demonstration is a collateral demonstration of a God, the sole Creator of mathematics. But, as the Creator is infinitely wise and good, and among his other works hath made man a rational and morally free agent, if man hath fallen into corruption of nature, and into sin and misery, it necessarily follows, that his infinitely gracious Creator hath willed his reformation and redemption; and that his infinite wisdom hath contrived, and his infinite power applied, the means of his redemption. Again, as God is infinitely good, it must be his will, that man should do good, and abstain from evil, for instance, that he should cherish his father, and endeavour to 'prolong his life, and that he should not wilfully murder his father, as fully convinced, and knowing, there is a God, and that God will reward the former, or punish the latter.

The certainty of these truths is what the learned call moral certainty; and I will venture to assert, that they can produce nothing mathematical of more clear, cogent, and absolute certainty. Sure I am, that not a tittle of their negative numbers, points, lines, surfaces, quantities, surds, all ideal and imaginary, nor in the demonstrations they pretend to build upon them, is supported with half the proof found in the moral proofs alleged. What! negative numbers, that

is, no numbers, multiplied so as to produce positive and real numbers! A point of no dimension to give dimension to a line! A line of no breadth to give breadth to a surface! A surface without quantity to inclose a real quantity! Supposing the reader of common sense to be but a slender mathematician, do not such positions put his faith more on the stretch than the Trinity ought to have put that of Newton, especially as the reader knows a great deal more of numbers, points, lines, surfaces, and quantities, than Newton did of the Divine Nature? And will he not change the name of such positions from surds to absurds? Having examined the sacred writers with some degree of explicity, I will not implicitly swallow these positions from the hands of the mathematicians; and, fine things as they may be for vanity to plume itself on, I am sensible, they are of little or no use to me or any body else. But whoever my reader is, I declare I have ten thousand irrefragable reasons for firmly believing, that Sir Isaac Newton was incomparably more apt to write lies and nonsense than St. Peter, St. John, or St. Paul. I ask no man's pardon for this declaration, lest I should be obliged to ask God's pardon for so doing. In this I have a teacher, to whom Newton was a fool, and made so by his mathematics. The lowest, and seemingly the weakest kind of moral proof, is that which rests on testimony; and yet in this instance, it is frequently of force sufficient to compel assent, as well as this, that the three angles of a right-lined triangle are equal to two right angles. Is there any rational man, but moderately acquainted with history or geography, who can possibly doubt, whether there ever was such a man as Julius Cæsar; or whether there is, or ever was such a city as Rome, though he never was in Italy? Doubting in such cases is impossible.

Notwithstanding the plainness and clearness of these allegations, the refiners, just mentioned, having found irresistible proof in mathematical demonstrations, and absurdly looking for their favourite mathematics in every thing, have either tried to carry its species of proof into other branches of knowledge, wherewith it hath not even a remote analogy; as if a physician should attempt to prove, before a judge and jury, his right to a particular horse, by an aphorism of

Hypocrates; or, what is yet more prejudicial to truth, they have degraded moral proof into somewhat less to be depended on, or less certain, than the mathematical, so as to render it rather problematical. Nevertheless, as if there were logical degrees of certainty, they still talk of moral certainty, that is, to me, of uncertain certainty. Nothing is certain, if there is any thing more certain, in regard, I mean, to the same understanding.

One observation more, and I have done. As prejudice, interest, and passion, by their influence over our will and heart, frequently diminish the power of moral evidence and proof on our actions, rather than our judgment; so if they are once gained over by proof and reason, they second the practical conviction with an equal degree of vigour. Their effect however in thus interfering with common sense and reason, should not be confounded with it by a good logician. It is true, our Saviour saith, 'this is the work of God, that ye believe in him, whom he hath sent;' but in this our Saviour means, believing with the concurrence of the will and heart, a mode of expression often used in Scripture, and not only with the judgment, as the 'devils do,' who in spite of their infernal hatred to our religion, are forced 'to believe' by mere moral proof, as strongly as a mathematician is compelled to assent by his compulsory demonstrations. Some take our Saviour's expression in this sense, that faith is the work of God in the heart of man; and this is true of saving faith, but not of that which is merely historical. In this latter sense his words could not be a direct answer to the Jews, who had put this question to him, 'What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?' To this question the Holy Spirit, speaking by St. Paul, sufficiently explains our Saviour's answer. 'In the gospel,' saith he, Rom. i. 16, 17, 'the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith,' that is, from the faith of the understanding to the faith of the heart; for chap. x. 9, he adds, 'if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' A man, or a devil, may be forced by moral evidence, to believe with the understanding; but, until he gives up his heart and will to this evidence, he hath not done the work

of God, nor indeed any work of his own. The first degree of faith is compulsory; the second, voluntary, and is that of the whole man, possessing, not only his intellect, but likewise his animal nature. He that hath not the first degree of faith, is an infidel, only because he either never had an opportunity of knowing its evidence, or would not attend to it, for fear of wedding his heart to certain principles, too coercive, as he foresaw, to be submitted to by his passions and habits.

It is to be wished, that more justice were done to faith by men of commerce, who owe all their wealth to it; by men of the law, who found all their trials on it; by philosophers, who ignorantly endeavour to vilify its evidence; and by the class of piddling divines, who lose sight of it in a mist of conceited disputes, more prejudicial to religious truth than ignorance itself. Logical faith is a firm persuasion of any proposition on the testimony of others. The first degree of Christian faith is such a persuasion on the testimony of God, and of such men as we cannot rationally suspect of insufficiency in regard either to their means of information, or their veracity in reporting. And the second degree of Christian faith, founding itself on the first, is that faith of the understanding, which aided by the Spirit of God, takes possession of the heart and will, with all their practical, operative, and saving warmths. This is that joint work of God and man, by which man 'believeth in him, whom God hath sent' to teach and redeem that man. This is that evidence, which carries in it the 'demonstration of the Spirit and of power.' This is that 'faith which overcometh the world.' Philosophy, in none of its branches, can produce any thing of equal conviction, for who will sacrifice his life to it? Nothing of equal utility, for what in comparison, would signify the squaring of a circle, or a machine to exhibit a perpetual motion, if either could be found out? But this faith turns every thing into that gold, wherewith the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem are paved; this faith communicates a universal remedy; this faith discovers an art of flying above the fixed stars. Though these things may sound like allegories, they are the farthest from hyperboles of any thing in the world, as far as that the whole is greater than any of its

parts, or as far, as that duration without end will outlast a moment, or seventy years if you please. The mathematician who hath not weights, measures, and arithmetic for these truths, should never have presumed to palm his tables of purchase on a world, less awake than himself; nor ought his followers, in favour of their master, to have so strenuously contended with the followers of another mathematician for the honour of executing a scheme of fluxions, that is, for the honour of doing what neither of them ever did.

HYMNS.

HYMNS.

INTRODUCTION, BEWAILING THE DEFECTS OF THESE HYMNS.

They shall bring forth fruit in old age.—PSAL. xcii. 14.

1 How weak and low are these my strains!
How feebly burns my fire!
How little of myself remains!
My heart! what, nothing higher!

2 An hobbling verse, and a forc'd rhyme
With sentiments so faint,
Ill suit a subject, so sublime,
And seem to speak constraint.

3 Is this the offering, O my soul,
Which thou to God hast brought
For pardon'd sin, and sin so foul,
In word, in deed, in thought?

4 For hell escap'd and heaven acquir'd
By Christ's atoning blood,
How should a grateful heart be fir'd!—
But mine is drench'd in mud.

5 O why is higher genius given
To war and lawless love,
Than to the praise of God and heaven,
Of God, all praise above?

6 Is this the numbness of old age,
Or piety declin'd?
That damps in me the poet's rage,
And thus unnerves my mind?

7 In soil exhausted as I sow,
And late, what can accrue,
But grain unripe, reap'd under snow,
Like that of eighty-two?*

* The harvest in 1782, was the latest ever known in *Great Britain* and *Ireland.*

8 The gleanings of my meagre field,
You see too closely reap'd;
Alas how little could it yield,
When only these escap'd!

9 Or hath my God from me withdrawn
That gratitude and zeal,
Even those, which warm'd my early dawn!
Both, reader, I bewail.

10 O turn not thou a critic then,
Nor vilify these lays,
But, add thy spirit to my pen,
Thy GOD, and mine to praise.

11 I seek his glory, not my own,
Nor catch at thy applause;
For my own sins, and thine, I groan—
Groan thou too, there is cause.

12 Thus censur'd by yourself, you cry,
Pray, why then publish these?
The low I censure, not the high,
The brushwood, nor the trees.

13 But if a spreading oak shall crown
The shrubs that under grow,
Why then desire to cut it down,
When these begin to blow?

14 Our lowly efforts, when we sing
On such exalted themes,
May, moth-like, rise on feeble wing,
And higher soar in flames.

15 In human bodies, lesser parts
We see with greater join'd,
The fingers, toes,—and sometimes warts,
With arms and legs combin'd.

16 Are you a Christian? you will here
Enough to censure find;
But censure rather with a tear,
Than a disdainful mind.

17 But if an irreligious heart
You bring to this review,
Your taste, your judgment, and your art
Have nothing here to do.

18 For God, and candour, far too vain,
Avaunt from things like these,
Go, kindle in a song profane;
At hymns you can but freeze.

19 The writer blushes at your praise,
For praise your satire takes,
This crowns him with poetic bays,
That swills him thro' a jakes.

20 All praise from him who merits none,
Is shameless want of sense;
Or, if by views of service won,
Is obloquy propense.

21 This sort of praise unbought I seize,
And for applause assume;
Nay, seize it as the truest praise,
And wear it as my plume.

A

HYMN FOR PENITENTS.

1 When backward on my actions past
I turn my mournful eyes,
The black review from first to last,
With guilt all crowded lies.

2 When on the time to come I pore,
The louring prospect shews
A dreadful sea without a shore,
A sea of fears and woes.

3 Behold, even now the storm begins,
The swelling billows rise,
And gathering fury from my sins,
And from the angry skies,

4 Thro' terrors not to be express'd,
My troubled soul they drive,
Of hope, of comfort, and of rest,
My anxious heart deprive.

5 Oppress'd by fear, by hope betray'd,
'Tis vain to stand or fly;
For life unfit, of death afraid,
I must, but dare not, die.

6 From God's all-seeing eyes to hide,
Or skreen me from his view,
'Tis vain in darkness to confide,
He looks my conscience through.

7 If at the centre of the globe
I make my sleepless bed,
And draw the mountains like a robe,
Around my guilty head;

8 Transparent to his piercing sight,
The dark and solid mass
From all sides drinks the conscious light;
The globe to him is glass.

9 If by gay company I try
My inward pain t' assuage,
Or to my conscience wine apply,
To cool its burning rage;

10 Suspended for a time, the fire
With fiercer fury burns;
The lash drawn back, and lifted higher,
With double force returns.

11 If to philosophy I run,
My conscience to appease,
By thought, alas! I am undone,
And reason's my disease.

12 Reason apart, I had not known,
These conscientious throes;
Yet reason for its wounds, alone,
No cure, no balsam knows.

13 If on repentance I rely,
Resolv'd to sin no more;
This no atonement can supply,
Nor quit my former score.

14 Thus by my guilty self o'erthrown
Tormented and betray'd,
I feel no succour of my own,
Nor hope of foreign aid.

15 Well-nigh distracted with my fears,
And almost wild with woe—
To cleanse, or cool my soul, these tears
In fruitless torrents flow.

16 In this distress, to thee for aid
My Saviour, I repair;
Thy wounds my helpless cause shall plead,
And hide me from despair.

17 There, blessed Saviour, take me in,
There safely let me lie,
Till thou hast purg'd my soul from sin,
And vengeance passes by.

18 Thou didst not for the righteous fall,
Thou Saviour of mankind:
Oh no, it was for me, and all,
Like me, corrupt and blind.

19 To the bright beams of faith in thee
I lift my weeping eyes;
My wretched state with pity see;
Hear, and enforce my cries.

20 Wash me, O wash me in that tide,
Which from thy wounds did flow;
The bolt of justice turn aside,
And shield me from its blow.

21 My guilt arrests my timid prayer
From the celestial throne;
Be thou my intercessor there,
And for that guilt atone.

22 Then wrath and justice, thus appeas'd,
And room for mercy given,
My soul may live, and GOD be prais'd,
For a new joy in heaven.

23 Methinks to mitigate the laws,
Through faith I see thee rise;
I see damnation in my cause,
Salvation in thy eyes.

24 I hear thee plead my faith, my prayers,
My penitential tears;
This plea, alas! proportion bears,
Nor to my guilt, nor fears.

25 But this imperfect plea to aid,
Thy wounds I see thee shew;
Those wounds that for my ransom paid
From endless chains below.

26 This justice of its wrath disarms ;
This mercy sets at large ;
This dissipates my dire alarms ;
This, conscience, clears thy charge.

27 O with what ecstasy, what bliss,
I hear the loud acclaim
Of angels, who adore for this,
My God, thy glorious name.

28 Since heaven, my soul, vouchsafes to make
Thy happiness it's own ;
Since hallelujahs, for thy sake,
Salute th' eternal throne ;

29 Re-echo to the world below
The joyful song of love :
What thou hast felt, let sinners know,
That mercy reigns above.

30 To transport, O my God, like mine,
No words can give a dress ;
Goodness and tenderness like thine,
No transport can express.

31 Above all heights thy mercies soar,
Beneath all depths they sound ;
They stretch where time and place no more
Afford or end, or bound.

32 O for the trumpet which shall shake
The still and silent tomb,
And all mankind, at once awake
To their eternal doom !

33 Thro' this to such as sleep in sin,
I'd roar my late alarms ;
Or try despairing souls to win
By sounding mercy's charms.

34 And as the highest pitch of praise,
To which my thanks could fly,
It's very loudest sounds I'd raise,
And thus those sounds apply.

35 Although the sins that press'd my head,
Were all as mountains great,
Countless as dust, as scarlet red,
And my repentance late ;

36 Yet even to me, when hopes were past,
God's Holy Spirit lent
Grace to return, and at the last
Sincerely to repent.

37 Altho' my Saviour's laws I broke,
And on his precepts trod,
His blood redeem'd me from the stroke
Of an avenging God.

38 Justice appeas'd, the Father gave
Sweet mercy leave to reign;
From hell he snatch'd me, and the grave,
While friends accus'd in vain;

39 Snatch'd me with his all-gracious hand
From hell's devouring flames,
And set me a just kindled brand,
'Midst Eden's flow'ry streams.

40 Here by the tree of life I grow,
And firmly striking root,
My blossoms now begin to blow,
And promise wholesome fruit.

41 Hosannah to the Trinity,
Whose glory as of old,
So ever loudly let it be
By men and angels told.

FEAR AND HOPE.

1 My God is gracious, and I'm vile;
But as I sin deplore,
Perhaps on me he yet may smile—
He smiles—and I adore.

2 Through blended tears of joy and woe
Let me behold his face,
And let those tears in torrents flow,
That flow from springs of grace.

3 Water'd by tears, and warm'd by joy,
A gratitude takes root,
Which no heart-winter shall annoy
In blossom, or in fruit.

4 If thou, O Lord, shall deign to shine
On my corrupted earth,
A fruitful harvest, wholly thine,
From thence shall take its birth.

5 Break up, O Lord, my fallow ground;
Send in the plough and spade;
O fence me strongly round and round,
Lest beasts and fiends invade.

6 Pluck from my heart the noxious weeds,
Which now the soil disgrace;
O sow therein thy wholesome seeds,
And give the wish'd increase.

7 Let mercy warm the tender root
Of that which thou hast sown,
That hope may cherish the new fruit,
'Till to full ripeness grown.

8 And putrid as my heart hath been,
To thee and goodness dead,
Thy hand there felt, and not unseen,
A plenteous crop shall spread.—

9 This known among thy husbandmen,
Shall industry persuade,
Even where the thicket or the fen
Forbade the plough and spade.

10 Urge thou, O Lord, while I stand fair,
Thy penetrating dart,
And drive—but drive not to despair
A self-dejected heart.

11 I tremble on the verge of time,
On doubting billows tost;
Is either hope or fear a crime?
No, or I'm doubly lost.

12 Yet how can hope of glory dwell,
Where sin so long hath dwelt?
How dare I feel the dread of hell,
Since Christ in me is felt?

13 O when shall this contention cease,
Of hope and fear this strife?
When shall I taste internal peace;
Sweet peace, the life of life.

14 Let hope in thee, O Lord, prevail
My drooping soul to cheer;
Let no new doubts that hope assail,
Nor aggravate my fear.

15 My hopes resounded to thy flock,
Shall courage give to all,
Who building high on thee their rock,
Shall dread no future fall.

16 From all the depths of sin and fear
Repentant I ascend;
By strong-wing'd faith, and through this tear,
My God to thee I tend.

17 Among men David bears the mark
Of a most Godlike mind;
A mind inspir'd, and yet so dark!
So wise, and yet so blind!

18 O Son of Jesse, great and good!
To passion what a thrall!
How sunk in lust, in fraud, in blood!
From God how great a fall!

19 Who slew the poor man's single lamb,
When he had sheep in store;
Himself and visitor to cram?—
David did this, and more.

20 Tho' he had hundreds of his own,
Debauch'd Uriah's wife;
Husband of that one wife alone,
And took Uriah's life.

21 By pleasure fell, by trouble rose,
His only way to rise.
We fools, who lawless pleasure chose,
By trouble may grow wise.

22 Presume not man, for David fell,
Caught in Satanic snare;
But rose again from sin and hell,
That no man may despair.*

23 Who teaches me myself to know,
My thread of life to span;
So short, so weak, so coarse, so low?
Thou, David, art the man.

* This thought is borrowed from bishop Hall.

24 Thro' gloomy guilt, to cheerful hope,
What safe conductor can
Teach me the narrow path to grope?
Thou, David, art the man.

25 We shudder at Uriah's wife
No less than at his blood,
And tremble at the mortal strife,
That reign'd among thy brood.

26 Both baneful fruits and wholesome weeds,
In life's impartial field,
Can propagate alike their seeds,
Alike their produce yield.

27 The man who thinks he stands upright
On firm and level ground,
Should not depend on his own might
In David feeble found.

28 For his too strong and deadly foe,
Within him or without,
His resolution may o'erthrow,
His confidence may rout.

29 Therefore let him to God alone
Look up for strength to stand;
He won't securely trust his own,
If he his own hath scann'd.

30 From depths profound, where now I lie
Beneath thy wrathful rod,
O see my anguish, hear my cry,
My Saviour and my God.

31 To whelm my soul, deep calls on deep,
Which o'er my guilty head
In unresisted surges sweep
Of sin, remorse, and dread.

32 Far better deeps those fears dismiss,
Which on my spirits prey;
Thy blood of mercy that abyss,
Shall sweep my fears away.

33 Here, all in raptures will I dive,
'Till faith shall pardon find;
Here will I die, and here revive
In a regenerate mind.

34 Purg'd in this laver, Lord, I claim
Thy mercy and thy peace;
From Jesus now I take my name,
And my new life of grace.

35 If I am sav'd, who can be lost?
Who's wicked, if I'm good?
Yet sav'd I am at the high cost
Of thy atoning blood.

36 For my poor wand'ring soul, thus found,
Loud hallelujahs rise,
And in the song of angels sound
Thy praises and their joys.

37 Peace on remorse, that thorny tree,
Like wholesome fruit is hung;
Happy the man by this set free,
Tho' not by this unstrung.

38 Deep in my soul it's point I feel,
By conscience driven in;
Keener yet better far than steel,
It wounds to let out sin.

39 From me of vice remove the stench,
My God, in whom I trust;
In me the fire sulphureous quench;
Of pride, of wrath, of lust,

40 Of riches, and vain glory, Lord,
Those springs of guilt and shame,
To virtue kindled by thy word
Shall dart a purer flame.

41 My virtues shall thy glory raise,
Who sow'd in me their seeds;
My vices too shall speak thy praise,
My bad, but pardon'd deeds.

42 By sin, thy mercies, Lord, are known,
(How greatly both abound!)
And still the greater that is grown,
The greater these is found.

43 Illumin'd, Lord, let me convey
To souls benighted here,
Of thy own light and love a ray,
This clouded sphere to cheer.

44 Father of peace, of love, of light,
Diffus'd around so far,
Let me but twinkle thro' this night,
A secondary star.

45 Wash me, O Jesus, in thy blood,
From every stain of sin,
And in thy goodness shew me good,
All vile as I have been.

46 Touch me, O thou eternal dove,
And fan me with thy wing;
So shall I glow with heavenly love,
And like a seraph sing.

47 Accept this lay, tho' not as part
Of the celestial strain;
Yet as it's echo from the heart,
That sings—but sings with pain.

48 Yes, pain I feel, even while I sing,
And tremble on each note;
The dread of sin's returning sting
Gives hoarseness to my throat.

49 Yet if I cannot music make,
I'll make a joyful noise:
For music, God this noise will take,
Express'd in grateful joys.

EVENING ALLUSIVE.

1 My spirits sink, there is no way,
No way at least that I can find,
Forth from this darkness and dismay,
A darkness felt throughout my mind.

2 Why tremble, O my soul, why shrink,
Why shiver at approaching night;
Which but presents the balmy brink
Of rest nor terror to thy sight?

3 Ah, night! and rest! is this not death,
Which chills my refluent tide of blood,
Suspends the spring of life, my breath,
And hides from me all view of good.

4 'Tis death—one worm already hangs
Upon my flesh; another brings
To my poor soul his dreadful fangs,
His tail envenom'd, and his stings.

5 Ha! are not these the dragon's claws?
And, tell me, is not this his home?
Methinks I hear him grind his jaws!
Methinks I see him churn his foam!

6 Thy shield and spear, O Christ impart,
And let me clearly see my foe;
Add courage to my dastard heart,
Add thy own vigour to my blow.

7 Why prey on me thou conscious beast?
Art thou not glutted with that tide,
Which made for thee a drunkard's feast
In Jesu's wounded limbs and side?

8 Avaunt, thou worm, my debt is paid,
My very conscience now stands clear:
O death, of thee I'm not afraid;
What then is left that I should fear?

9 Altho' thy gloomy vale I tread,
The lamp of God my path shall shew;
Supported by his staff, I dread
No gulf nor precipice below.

10 Fed with immortal food, and arm'd
With sword and helmet, I proceed;
Arous'd with zeal, with courage warm'd,
I find my war-word in my creed.

11 Serpents may hiss, and lions roar,
And all the fiends of hell combine;
I fear their fury now no more,
Almighty King, thy strength is mine.

12 Two-edged sword, I brandish thee,
Thou weapon high and sharp in fight;
The powers of hell before thee flee,
And testify their fears by flight.

13 They run, th' infernal dragon runs,
And with a loud and hideous yell,
Thy two-edg'd blade aghast he shuns,
And seeks for shelter in his hell.

14 Now death, say thou, where is thy sting?
Now grave, where is thy rotten crown?
The weakest soldier of my King
O'erwhelms you both, and treads you down.

MORNING ALLUSIVE.

1 ADIEU my fears, the sun of souls
Arises glorious in his might;
The darkness now no longer scowls,
'Tis morning now, and all is light.

2 Hail to the dawn of Christian day!
Night's frightful horrors are dispell'd;
It's errors too before thy ray
May now be shunn'd, because beheld.

3 How fade the lesser lights, and moon!—
From more to more, from here to there,
The splendour brightens to it's noon,
As stronger rays the eye can bear.

4 'Tis heaven within me. All around
Loud hymns the day-spring from on high;
By faith I hear the joyful sound,
My trembling Christian shall not die.

5 Thou dastard nature, where's the gloom,
By sin so lately thrown on thee?
New hopes, new joys around me bloom,
And cloudless mercy shines on me.

6 The pit, the precipice, the snare,
The fox, the lion, I can spy;
Tigers and serpents are laid bare,
And the false brother, to my eye.

7 Here objects, whether black or white,
In their own proper size and shape,
Whate'er their lightness, or their weight,
From my discernment can't escape.

8 Distinguish'd here, the good, the ill,
The small, the great, the false, the true,
Lie naked now before my will,
And stand the test of my review.

9 Transparent now, which was opaque,
I by this piercing light perceive,
Curtains, and painted screens forsake
The skulking felon, and the knave.

10 What's that so beautiful, so fair?
(A stronger beam, O Lord, dispense)
'Tis pleasure follow'd by despair;
I see the tail and sting of sense.

11 What dust is that so wond'rous bright?
(Wipe it, O Jesus, from my eyes)
'Tis gilded dirt now to my sight,
Of sin and labour the sole prize.

12 What's that whereon he stands so high,
Who there o'ertops the gazing crowd?
Ambition's dunghill I descry;
Foh! how it stinks! yet he is proud.

13 To this all penetrating light
I also, now translucent grown,
Have of myself obtain'd a sight,
And I'm to me now not unknown.

14 Two worms discover'd in my breast—
Sin pray'd on me, and guilt on sin—
I crush them both now on the crest,
And re-establish peace within.

15 The tree of knowledge, now no more
Forbidden to my eager grasp,
Presents me with it's lovely store;
It's fruits I taste, it's stem I clasp.

16 It fills me with distaste of ill;
To God and good it opes my eyes;
To these it guides my heart and will;
That, it instructs me to despise.

17 No angel now, with flaming sword,
Stands sentry to life's healing tree;
Christ pulls its fruits, and by his word,
In plenty pours them down on me.

18 Two branches at this tree commence,
Whereon its saving fruits are hung;
Which by his wounded hands from thence
In health and endles life are flung.

19 O Christ, how bitter is this fruit,
In which thy precious blood we own?
How ill with Christians must it suit,
To joy in it, as sweet alone!

10 Tho' sweet as life it must be found
By self, yet Christian gratitude
To taste its bitterness is bound,
For press'd, it yields, for wine, thy blood.

21 Now thro' the flowers, and o'er the fruits
The lambent ardour sweetly plays,
Gives language to the lovely mutes,
Whose scents and colours speak its praise.

22 The great Dispenser now bestows
In plenty his prolific seeds;
This opens, that in vigour grows,
As he their vegetation feeds;

23 Feeds with the moisture he exales
By his own warmth from living springs,
And wafts on softly breathing gales,
New imp'd with light aerial wings.

24 With these benignant to baptize
The infant germs, and life infuse,
He grants the genial power to rise,
Imparted in his tepid dews.

25 These plants appear to smile and weep
At once, thro' their translucent gems,
While in their tears their roots they steep,
And upward still erect their stems.

26 This genial moisture prompts the growth
Of vines, of corn, and humbler plants,
Which serve as food and med'cine both,
To satisfy a thousand wants.

27 This, when the rose-bud it shall reach,
Shall rise in odours thro' the air;
This lends its blushes to the peach,
Their sweetness to the plum and pear.

28 By this the cedar and the pine
From earth to heights exalted rise,
And 'spiring, as of race divine,
Look upward still and claim the skies.

29 Hence offerings to the source of day
In crowds, unforc'd, themselves return,
And here the pines and cedars lay
Their wood for fuel, glad to burn!

30 When lo, the holy fire descends
From heaven in a resplendent beam,
Which quickly to its source retends,
And lifts the victims up in flame.

31 Thou Jesus, art the life and light
Of whatsoever truly lives,
Of whatsoever walks aright,
And tendance to thy guidance gives.

32 How glorious is this light, which shines
Throughout my spirit, soul, and heart!
Wherewith congenial warmth combines,
New life and vigour to impart!

33 This sends the monsters to their fens;
This profligates the beasts of prey;
This drives the lions to their dens,
For spoil and murder shun the day.

34 This mankind forth with safety sends
To do the work which God commands;
Here one the flock with care attends;
There others cultivate the lands.

35 Here one the word of God explains,
And leads the people in his way;
While others there with civil reins,
Teach lawless nations to obey.

36 Each guided by the light of day,
Rejoices in its cheering smiles;
Sees flowers and fruits adorn his way,
And feels a rapture in his toils.

37 Trusting in him who helps and saves,
They love in mutual aid employ;
They sometimes weep—but bring their sheaves,
And come again at night with joy.

38 Rich is that harvest, short that night,
Succeeded by an endless day,
Wherein the soul pursues a flight
More rapid than the solar ray.

39 The tow'ring soul on mental wings,
As soon as call'd away from hence,
Arises still, and still it sings
The song of love, thro' space immense.

40 Thro' realms and worlds this angel goes
On awful messages of state;
Sometimes to pour out penal woes,
To do, or be, what fools call fate.

41 But better pleas'd he issues forth,
High charg'd with blessings and with peace;
Rewards for virtue, and for worth,
The objects of his Master's grace.

42 To him creation is disclos'd,
Its nature, property, and end;
How all its powers and parts dispos'd,
And to what purposes they tend.

43 How our blood circulates he knows;
How growth is given to herbs and trees;
The cause of thunder and of snows,
Of planetary motions, sees.

44 From all the worlds, which him surround
(Whate'er their distance, or their site)
He hears his hymns of praise rebound,
And feels redoubled his delight.

45 But when from these he to the source
Of majesty and light aspires;
Love adds new pinions to his course,
And burns in beatific fires.

46 Faith and her lovely nursling, Hope,
Need now no longer feel their way;
The seeing soul hath ceas'd to grope,
Absorb'd in love's all-perfect day.

47 Angels embrace him, and God smiles,
He's landed on the blissful shore,
Beyond the terrors and the wiles
Of fiends and flesh—his trial's o'er.

THE STORM AT SEA ALLUSIVE.

1 SINCE it hath pleas'd thee, gracious Lord,
To launch my bark upon this sea
Of men, of monsters, and of storms,
O guide it in thy perfect way.

2 From hence thy wonders I behold,
With eyes astonish'd and aghast;
The winds arise, the furious winds,
The billows too obey the blast.

3 When thou art angry at our sins,
The fiends, let loose, commotions raise
On this too agile element,
These boist'rous, these politic seas.

4 I mount to heaven, when truth and peace
With strong and temperate spirit blow;
But when the wind of faction reigns,
To hell-ward down again I go.

5 Above I hear the angel choir,
Below I hear the infernal yell;
I reel, I stagger to and fro,
And tremble between heaven and hell.

6 These foaming waters cast up mire,
Which flash'd opprobious in my face;
My character attempt to sink,
As well as life in deep disgrace.

7 This element so cold to thee,
To me appears to burn and blaze,
And, as if kindled up by hell,
Around me darts malignant rays.

8 This way and that it quickly moves
As popular magicians blow;
It boils, it foams, it vapours high,
And down again it falls in snow.

9 Lo the seditious monsters gape
For me, the grampus and the shark!
Night too comes on, and how shall I
Attain my haven in the dark?

10 Methinks I see the monster near,
(How wide and dreadful is his jaw!)
That seiz'd thy falling prophet, Lord,
And lodg'd him in his hideous maw.

11 Lo, all the little I laid in
For my long passage o'er the sea,
The factious waves have swallow'd down,
Yet bounce, and gape for farther prey.

12 A thousand factious blasts of wind,
With every wild and madding wave,
Contend my aged head to sink,
And furious all around me rave.

13 Ah! Lord, my conscience hears that peal
Of dreadful thunders o'er my head;
Thou too art angry at my sins;
The judgments I deserve, I dread.

14 The surges mount and meet the skies,
High o'er my bark and me they foam.
Is not thy holy church my bark?
What else can bring me safely home?

15 To save the human race of old,
Thou did'st, O Lord, prescribe an ark;
And from a more pernicious flood
To save mankind, hast made this bark.

16 The angry billows rage and roar;
The floods, O Lord, exalt their voice;
O dash them on the shore in froth,
Thou God, more mighty, than their noise.

17 How dare, ye surges, thus presume!
'Tis God omnipotent that reigns;
Subside, ye waves, ye people quake;
Behold, he shakes his sword and chains!

18 Those lofty rocks I see with dread,
And clearly seeing, strive to shun,
While on these latent sands and shoals
My unsuspecting efforts run.

19 O'er these the dimpling waters smile,
And lambent round my vessel play;
Frightful are rocks, but flattering shoals
Are far more dangerous than they.

20 Thou, Lord, alone canst calm the sea,
And bid its billows cease to roar;
Thou too the noisy crowd canst quell,
And bid it's tumults rage no more.

21 This way and that, now high, now low,
Bandied by every furious wave,
My sympathetic brain begins
To falter, and just not to rave.

22 As drunk, deserted by myself,
Of my own wits I find the end;
To thee, O Lord, I lift my voice,
My Saviour, Comforter, and Friend.

23 Still, Lord, the fury of these waves;
These schisms and heresies assuage,
Which raise this tempest in the deep,
Which blow up faction into rage.

24 Though life and safety must depend
On strict concurrence of our crew,
On mutual aid of one and all,
And all confess, that this is true;

25 Yet mutual hatred takes the place
Of this most salutary truth:
We're all engag'd, and all embroil'd
In strife untimely and uncouth.

26 Each hand on board wou'd all direct
In managing the helm and sails,
The compass and the chart unview'd,
Not one regards the stars or gales.

27 This way, says one, another, that,
Our wish'd-for land, and harbour lies:
Expand the canvas, here one roars,
No, furl it up, another cries.

28 Loud as the storm is, Lord, I hear
The drunkards bellow under deck,
Outrageous scold, or sing, or curse,
Insensate of control or check.

29 The passengers, as if in league
With this tempestuous wind and sea,
And as forgetful of their lives,
Are as tumultuous as they.

30 They twice have set the ship on fire,
And cry, what mortal that can swim,
Would trust his life to boards and nails?
To this too frail mechanic whim?

31 They value neither ship nor sails,
But trust a bladder fill'd with wind,
Not worse replenish'd than their brains,
An emblem of their bloated mind.

32 The wisdom both of thee and man
These self-sufficient fools arraign;
Depending on themselves alone,
They every borrowed aid disdain.

33 Two others, not much better skill'd,
Than these, in maritime affairs,
Have seiz'd the cock-boat, and declare
Their confidence in faith and prayers.

34 But who believes? or who can pray?
Not he who disobeys, or hates
Or thee or men; or who to man
Too freely of thy Godhead prates.

35 Self-will'd they are, and far too proud
To thy appointment to conform:
Thy ship they overweening quit,
And trust a cock-boat in this storm.

36 The Dathans and Abirams here,
Like those of old to yawning ground,
Down to their kindred monsters plunge
To find a grave, not less profound.

37 Here one in drink, for a Divine,
Feels a foul spirit from below;
There one, as drunk, for aid implores
A wooden woman at the prow.

38 The crew, a faithless tribe, conspire
To sell us to that ship in sight,
Which hoists a white seductive flag,
And hopes a capture without fight.

39 Our captain, to whom sea and land,
And all the starry host were known,
Who, as a path-way trod the deep,
Hath overboard been lately thrown.

40 His chart too, as a hated scroll
I see still floating on the waves,
Toss'd by the demon of the air,
As every billow sinks or heaves,

41 His footsteps, we no longer trace.
The winds, our pilots thro' the sea,
May drive us as the prince of air
Shall on destruction urge our way.

42 That demon now employs the winds,
And all the raging billows rolls,
To lacerate our sails and mast,
To dash us on the rocks and shoals.

43 'Tis not at sea alone this fiend
Plays off th' artillery of his air;
At land he raises wilder storms,
And lends them greater fury there.

44 By poison'd air his plagues are spread,
And fairest characters undone;
Murder is breath'd, a single word
Is death, and every mouth a gun.

45 Whole states and kingdoms by his blasts,
Strongly through factious bellows blown,
In earthquakes politic are shook,
And into wild convulsions thrown.

46 His legal hurricanes lay waste
The rights of mankind at the bar:
Here he a city sets on fire,
And there enkindles furious war.

47 His moral Ætnas loudly roar
Terrific thunders from the tongue;
Hence blasphemies in face of heaven
With violence infernal flung.

48 This prince of air, O Lord, dethrone,
And to his cavern deep confine,
So shall the land and sea confess,
That all the universe is thine.

49 The rebel winds and waves obey,
And softly breathe, and gently glide,
The popular commotions cease
The moment thou shalt deign to chide.—

50 Rejoic'd I see thee on the deck;
Thy hand the mast of faith upstays;
I hear salvation in that voice;
"Be hush'd ye winds, be calm ye seas."

51 The frighten'd demons dread thy voice;
The dastard monsters of the deep,
Hiding their heads in mud below,
No longer on the surface sweep.

52 Lo, now the harbour I approach
Of peace, with wide extended sails,
And scud along the level deep
Before thy now propitious gales.

53 Lead, lead me to that lofty rock,
Which higher rears it's tow'ring head,
Than me thy humble mariner,
And then this deep and watery bed.—

54 Now, now my soul from danger free,
Establish'd firmly on this rock,
Transported, eyes the promis'd land,
And pants to join thy happy flock.

55 In hallelujahs loud to join
For these, and countless mercies more;
For these, my Saviour, and my God,
With all thy saints, I thee adore.

56 O were my heart as good as theirs,
How should this grateful song aspire,
To sound among th' angelic hymns,
With all their ardour, all their fire.

57 But, blessed Lord, accept from dust
Such grov'ling thanks as dust can bring;
Angels themselves, in highest strains,
Can their best thanks but poorly sing.

THE GREAT WORLD.

1 MAN is miscall'd a little world
By such as estimate
The magnitude of every thing
By measure, or by weight.

2 But man is constituted lord
Of this inferior earth,
And moves a greater world, in right
Of his transcendent birth.

3 This mighty monarch throws his eye
O'er his extended realm;
Sees nature working for his use,
And seats him at her helm.

4 The plants, the beasts, the birds submit
To his imperial sway;
The finny people render him
The tribute of the sea.

5 His power resistless is confess'd
By elephants and whales;
He bears loud thunder in his hands;
The winds wait on his sails.

6 The air, the earth, the glorious sun,
The wide extended sea,
Supply his wants, to his delights,
And humble homage pay.

7 To mould himself, or more or less,
To good or ill, he's free;
And is the maker of himself
In kind, and in degree.

8 Nay, of this present world he rules,
He reaps as he hath sown;
And (such it's plastic nature) forms
A new world of his own.

9 Where'er he goes, he grandeur gives
To every object near;
While distant mountains sink to hills,
Or but as clouds appear.

10 Th' adjacent hills to mountains rise
To fill their monarch's sight;
As proud of their approach, they spread,
And climb to greater height.

11 On whatsoe'er around he looks,
As it approaches nigh,
Th' ambitious object larger grows,
And swells to meet his eye;

12 But shrinks in bulk, in colour fades,
If at a distance plac'd
From him, whose presence gave it size,
As banish'd and disgrac'd.

13 Where'er he moves, to right or left,
His eyes, if upward hurl'd,
Inform him, he himself is still
The centre of the world.

14 Man's then a greater world than this,
Whereof he's lord and head;
This orb created for his use,
And humbled to his tread.

15 Altho' his days are here but few,
Yet in th' historic page,
In the prophetic too, he lives,
And lives from age to age.

16 Not only this inferior world
In vassalage is given,
But to his utmost wish proposed
Reversions high in heaven.

17 To these his views are upward call'd
From this subservient globe;
He manna for his food foretastes,
Of light foresees his robe.

18 Is not then man a mighty world,
Of more than matter made?
A reasoning world, that is to shine,
When sun and moon shall fade?

19 Thro' ample space this mental world
Surveys the realms above;
Where God, by still more glorious works
His wonder prompts and love.

20 The starry heavens attract his sight,
Where suns unnumbered blaze;
Where the creating word of God
Unbounded power displays.

21 Around these suns, so wide is space,
Is left sufficient room,
(Tho' seen from hence as brilliant dust,)
For circling worlds to spoom.

22 Far other systems which with these
In nothing correspond,
Hereafter he may view and know,
All mortal ken beyond;

23 To angels prove his kindred good,
And reign with them above,
A great recipient, and a source
Of endless joy and love.

24 How great a being then is man,
If only thus surveyed!
But how do sin and folly join
This being to degrade!

25 When ignorance and vice prevail,
He falls, alas! how low!
When sickness, pain, and death succeed,
He sinks to endless woe.

26 God made us upright, but we seek
Inventions of our own;
And hence by every blast of whim
From wisdom we are blown.

27 Of wisdom, virtue is the child,
And vice from folly springs;
O wretched man! to folly wed,
With all her train of stings.

28 Of wisdom, man at first possess'd,
Enjoyed her portion, power;
But wisdom he too soon forsook,
And with her lost her dower.

29 What he now claims of either serves
To heighten his distress;
A happier man he still might be,
If greater, or if less.

30 Only to plunge himself in straits,
How sharp is he, and wise!
How mighty to do mischief he!
How strong to fall, not rise!

31 From truth and honour he departs,
And into falsehood sinks!
In wily arts, in base designs,
In treachery he stinks.

32 The good he does his pride subverts,
Good works the man arraign;
His virtues swell his list of sins;
He's wicked, who is vain.

33 But oh! how little is the good,
His fancy on the stretch,
Applauds him for (if fairly weighed),
And plumes the bloated wretch!

34 Nay, how he often brags of vice,
And boasts himself the tool
Of sins he never durst commit!
The despicable fool!

35 What glory can pretended vice
To such a wretch transmit?
Who claims the honour to be deemed
The devil's hypocrite?

36 How does man upward sometimes rise!
How downward thrown again!
How herds he now among the swine!
How ranks he now with men!

37 On piety and wisdom raised,
On virtue how he soars!
But by corruption overthrown,
How he his fall deplores!

38 Reason and conscience dictate this,
Desire and passion, that;
Interest and cunning combat both;
What's man then! tell me, what?

39 An angel or a demon comes
From this intestine jar;
But which of these, who can decide,
While all within is war?

40 When this mysterious conflict seiz'd
On my bewildered mind,
Confusion rag'd thro' all my thoughts,
And wretched I was blind.

41 Without all form, and void I was;
The chaos in my soul
Of hopes, of fears, of doubts, then reigned
O'er me without control.

42 Shall we ascribe this wond'rous work,
So little, and so great,
So wretched, or so happy, Lord,
To thee, or to blind fate?

43 Let there be light, said Christ, and light
There was, and so uprear'd
Truth's banner to the world; which seen,
All doubting disappear'd.

44 Then I perceived that man was made
Consistent with his place;
And that this attribute explains
God's dealings with our race.

45 Here in the gospel-letters writ,
And characters of light,
We read man coming forth from God
A pure unspotted spright.

46 And here we see him basely fall,
By liberty misus'd;
His nature stain'd, and God enrag'd
At bounty thus abus'd.

47 To him thus driven up and down,
And this and that way hurl'd,
His Saviour comes, to lift him high
O'er this fallacious world.

48 "*For shame!*" he cries, "*assert thy rank,*
To native wisdom turn;
Lift up thy eyes to future things,
The present wisely spurn.

49 *Grovel no more, thou son of God,*
Nor welter in the mire;
To wisdom first, to virtue next,
And then to heaven, aspire.

50 *For greater things I made thee, man,*
And come to be thy guide;
Take up thy cross and follow me,
But bid adieu to pride.

51 *Man, falling, must endure the scourge*
Of trouble e'er he rise;
Must find himself a wretched fool,
Before he can grow wise.

52 *That pride which tumbled Satan down*
From glory and from bliss,
Wou'd with him surely plunge thee too
In the same dark abyss.

53 *Yield not to that too cunning fool,*
Who down from glory fell;
And tho' in darkness, chains, and fire,
Is proud to reign in hell.

54 *By which his fall, and murdering me,*
This wretch became the tool
Of his own pride, and prov'd himself
The first and greatest fool.

55 *Altho' to me, who died for thee,*
Thy senseless heart should cool;
Can thy indignant spirit stoop
The fool of such a fool?

56 *The bait he throws full in thy sight,*
Is pleasure, wealth, parade;
But gilded vapours these! how soon
From thy embrace they fade!

57 *Too wise the bird, that sees the net*
Spread for his life, to stay;
If not more foolish thou, from snares
Set for thy soul, away.

58 *One master only thou canst serve,*
One only of the two;
Or him, who kindly means to save,
Or him, who wou'd undo.

59 *With ease and safety I am serv'd,*
And honour crowns my work;
Beneath his pleasures, fear, and shame,
Remorse, and anguish lurk.

60 *Fear him, who justly can condemn*
To everlasting woe;
Love him, who can, and will redeem
From fiends and fire below.

61 *If me you either fear or love,*
All my commands fulfil;
However, when in this you fail,
Will then, at least, my will.

62 *Consort not with thy deadly foe,*
That foe, who only means
To make the partner of his crimes,
Th' associate of his chains.

63 *Remember well thy solemn vow*
To me, thy Saviour, given;
Adhere to that, and now resume
My upward way to heaven.

64 *Eternal flames, immortal soul,*
I set before thy eyes;
He who in wisdom flies from sin,
These flames eternal flies.

65 *Eternal joys, immortal soul,*
I offer to thy choice;
If 'tis thy wisdom these to choose,
In these shalt thou rejoice.

66 *To be as great as thou wert once,*
Thou must be greater still;
To rule this world is not so great,
As to subdue thy will.

67 *But to be great, thou must be good,*
And better than before;
A conqueror of thyself, indeed
Must be, and somewhat more.

68 *This glorious conquest to achieve,*
Thou must implore my aid;
A mortal, made or good or great,
By me alone is made.

69 *All powers above, and there below,*
To me by gift belong;
Without me none is wise or good;
Without me none is strong.

70 *Vain of thy wisdom, as profound,*
Thou soon shalt judge from hence,
Whether that wisdom, as it's best,
Amounts to common sense.

71 *Canst thou distinguish good from ill,*
And to the first adhere,
Rejecting with disdain the last,
Tho' sometimes looking fair?

72 *Canst thou to thy known happiness*
A steady choice affix,
And ne'er desire that happiness
With misery to mix.

73 *Canst thou the best of friends embrace,*
The worst of foes detest,
When thou the worst can well discern
From him who is the best?

74 *But if thy vaunted wisdom fails*
In trials such as these,
Go learn a little judgment, man,
From beavers or from bees.

75 *Or rather, as an ox or ass*
My prophet bids thee go
These teachers I too recommend
To faculties so low.

76 *If thou thy greatest good, well known,*
Shouldst wilfully refuse;
And open-eyed, thy greatest ill
Shouldst obstinately choose;

77 *Instead of me, if thou for guide*
To happiness, should take,
To gratify thy pride and lust,
Eve's counsellor, the snake;

78 *If such the wisdom of thy head,*
And goodness of thy heart,
In wisdom, goodness, or in me,
As yet thou hast no part.

79 *What drew me from the throne above,*
Down to th' accursed tree,
If thou shalt ask, ungrateful man,
It was my love for thee.

80 *What! now again thy hammer raise!*
What! whet anew thy spikes!
Thy sin thro' me, thou must believe,
Thy pointed iron strikes.

81 *If thou by faith even yet in me*
A member art indeed,
Thy crime that wounds me, wounds thyself,
And both together bleed.

82 *What! thou a Christian, and conspire*
To propagate the shame
Of Christ among the Infidels,
And teach them to blaspheme!

83 *With hell's foul monster, O thou fool,*
Thy heart I will not share;
The whole I purchas'd; to my foe
No part whereof I spare.

84 *Be wholly mine, or wholly his,*
Or up or down to go.
To climb to everlasting joys,
Or sink to endless woe.

85 *My patience, too much tir'd by crimes,*
By insults heretofore,
Thou brother of the worm, beware;
Provoke not boundless power.

86 *Provoke not justice; in my hand*
The sleeping thunder lies;
Which instant, if awak'd by sin,
In dreadful vengeance flies.

87 *But yet awake; return to me,*
And to my blood repair
With faith and grief I shall relent,
If both are found sincere.

88 *To each transgressor, who his sins*
Sincerely shall bewail,
A full forgiveness I shall grant,
And add my crimson seal.

89 *In me direct thy steps, and thou*
Thy way shall never miss;
I am the truth, the life, the way
To God and endless bliss.

90 *Arm, arm, and watch,—lo, this my hand*
Shall thy opposers quell,
Shall mortify thy lusts, and crush
The powers of earth and hell.

91 *I say to death, Where is thy sting?*
Where is thy conquest, grave?
O'er both I triumph, so shalt thou,
Who kills, whom I will save.

92 *Return to me in faith and tears,*
Thou late to sin a slave,
And thou shalt pardon, freedom, peace,
With boundless joy receive.

93 *Then thou, once much lamented piece,*
So sought, and hardly found,
Stampt with God's name anew in heaven,
Shall circulate around.

94 *What a new glow of gratitude*
Shall then itself impart,
In feelings of victorious love,
To thy transported heart!

95 *Welcome, thrice welcome, shall resound*
From all about the throne,
Whose loud Hosannahs shall proclaim
Thy raptures, and their own.

96 *My heart, O Saviour, hears thy words;*
To thee I lift my eyes;
Now deaf and blind to other things,
Thy eager convert cries.

97 *Thou hast not at the trifling price*
Of perishable toys,
For me this wondrous glory bought,
These everlasting joys.

98 *No Jesus, 'twas thy blood which snatch'd*
My soul from sin and flames;
And added mine to this bright list
Of thy victorious names.

99 *To me thy goodness thou hast given,*
And ta'en to thee my guilt;
That I might endless life enjoy,
Thy precious blood was spilt.

100 *Could nothing less my health restore?*
Nor less my life ensure?
Ah, bitter health! Ah, woful life!
What horror in my cure!

101 *Its eye on heaven, even thus obtain'd,*
This grateful horror turns;
And on thy cross my altar laid,
In love and anguish burns.

102 *To more than my primeval state*
Of grandeur I ascend;
The Lord with me makes his abode,
And kindly calls me friend.

103 *My lawless passions he subdues,*
And points my upward course;
My clouded understanding clears.
And gives my conscience force.

104 *While he sustains me with his hand,*
Above myself I live;
And to my God, who gave me all,
My all again I give.

105 *In language far more sweet than life*
My drooping soul he rears;
With kind reciprocation hears,
And grants my timid prayers.

106 *The little dignity I lost*
Of lordship o'er this earth
I, now, the child of God, forget,
As sunk in my new birth.

107 *For Christ obtain'd, for hell escap'd,*
For this my natal day,
What Hallelujahs shall I raise?
What gratitude repay?'

ON THE

PRESENT TIMES AND FASHIONS:

WITH

AN ADDRESS TO GOD

FOR

DELIVERANCE FROM OUR INFIDELITY AND CORRUPTION.

1 Old time, duration's mortal son,
A hoary dotard grown,
Is now by fashion taught to run
With symbols not his own.

2 His forelock cropp'd and shorn away,
His hourglass laid aside,
The wrinkled fop affects the gay,
The modish bow, and slide.

3 Furnish'd with cards and dice for play,
His sickle he conceals,
Watches by night, and sleeps by day,
Postponing all his meals.

4 All almanacks and calendars
With ruthless hand he burns,
And treating with contempt the stars,
The sun and moon he spurns.

5 O how he dances! how he sings!
All cloth'd in silks and lace!
Sparkling in diamonds and in rings;
Of virtue taking place!

6 Yet, steam-like still he downward flows,
Extirpating the past,
Perversely slow amidst our woes,
Amidst our pleasures, fast.

7 This chymist oft thro' dunghills tends,
Extracting all he meets,
And then his new perfumes he vends,
As aromatic sweets.

8 Each raptur'd lady courts the breeze,
As essenc'd by a goat;
Wherein are scents, so high as these,
So richly set afloat?

9 Fashion thus makes a fool of time,
Now goads, and now retards;
Thus rigs him for the grand sublime
Of lewdness, and of cards.

10 This mongrel loves nor good nor ill;
But as the latter may
Indulge his pride, and soothe his will,
He gives it all his sway.

11 How wisdom, and how virtue foil'd
By fashion quit the field,
And of their little empire spoil'd,
To whim and folly yield;

12 By all is seen, by none bewail'd
In these fantastic times,
Since infidelity prevail'd,
And licenc'd even our crimes;

13 Prevail'd with unresisted force
O'er statesmen and divines,
Who prance along the splendid course,
Where luxury refines.

14 Hence furious factions shake the throne,
And law-suits domineer;
Of property these pick the bone
Those lift the sword and spear.

15 Hence works of darkness find their night,
Adulteries and rapes;
Hence fraud and murder screen'd from sight,
Or seen in venial shapes.

16 Hence appetite of lawless gains;
Hence India weeps in blood
Her desolated towns and plains,
And starves amidst her food.

17 Religion scorn'd and virtue fled,
We see thy dreadful cloud,
O Lord, which gathers o'er our head,
Surcharg'd with thunders loud.

18 We eye the light'ning, hear the roar,
And yet take no alarm:
Nay, dare thy pointed bolt yet more,
And brave thy lifted arm.

19 Corrupt and perjur'd we presume
To rail at others' crimes,
Tho' we ourselves compose the spume
Of these detested times.

20 We prate for freedom, but mean power,
Already far too free;
Contend, yet, at the self-same hour,
On ruin all agree.

21 Man upright was by nature made,
And simple as a child,
Till he by pride from nature stray'd,
And by inventions wild:

22 Since which he lives the spawn of art,
Nor natural, nor wise;
His nature and his reason start
At his uncouth disguise.

23 This man, who once ador'd the sun,
A candle now adores;
Old daylight fashion bids him shun,
And trust to night his pores.

24 Fashion prevails o'er all mankind,
Each year, to come out new,
And that our Maker must be blind,
We all agree, is true.

25 Else why do we so often change
Our colour and our shape?
From fool to fool so madly range,
Some monster new to ape?

26 Is that a woman? surely no,
That monstrous hoop and head!
Her Maker was indeed her foe,
Or where's her beauty fled?

27 The finest figure, finest hair,
Are hid, or gone astray;
She's now no longer young or fair;
No, no, she's old and gray.*

28 If beauty sinks in such a dress,
And fades upon the sight,
What then does fashion'd homeliness,
But study to affright?

29 An animal of such a kind
Begotten ne'er hath been;
And yet it moves, or I am blind,
And wishes to be seen.

30 But how it can be once beheld,
In paint and splinters clos'd,
With head so high, and tail so swell'd
How much is reason pos'd!

* In the year 1783, all women were ladies, and all powdered.

31 God never made a thing like that,
In water, air, earth, fire;
No, 'tis of pride the monstrous brat,
And Satan is its sire.

32 See how it scuds with all its sails
Before the prince of air;
And, bounding forward, courts his gales,
Well of his port aware.

33 The savage woman, and the mad,
Hope to surmount your gauze,
Set up for queens, and wildly gad
In baubles, feathers, straws.

34 The old, by paint and powder try,
And tresses not their own,
Into the coxcombs arms to fly,
And hide the grizly crone.

35 These ancient pieces fashion give
To this promiscuous cheat,
That they again their lives may live,
And smuggle a new date.

36 Ye young and beautiful, how long
Shall senseless pride betray
Your blooming charms in such a throng
Of bedlams, young and gay?

37 Fashion is surely but a cheat,
If you are rich, how vain!
Why dress, if destitute of meat?
The beggar should go plain.

38 What slave would yield at his command,
Not void of common sense,
To be a fool at second hand,
And at too great expense?

39 In one the beau and beggar seen!
On folly can it pass?
A mule like this hath never been
Gender'd by goose and ass.

40 How can the golden calves endure
Their hypocrites in wealth,
Who its appearance to procure,
On trust depend, or stealth?

41 'Twas Satan taught us first to wish
For luxury in meats;
From hence the far sought costly dish,
And hence our splendid treats.

42 Asham'd, we clothing then requir'd,
And clothes grew up to dress;
We pomp in dressing next admir'd,
Too haughty grown for less.

43 'Tis by comparison that things
Seem either great or small;
The viewer, e'er he sees them, brings
His measures of them all.

44 The little mind still magnifies
The objects of its sight,
The great, diminishes their size
To trifles, small and slight.

45 As man beholds a grain of sand,
This world an angel sees.
A mite sees mountains, level land,
A world too, in his cheese.

46 You who find greatness in your lace,
Or in your glittering stone;
Or think they add a single grace,
How little is your own!

47 What, vain of clothing, which you took
To hide your sin and shame!
To hide what cannot bear a look,
What cannot bear a name!

48 The slaves of fashion vaunt in view
Their pomps to poorer slaves,
That they may teach both me and you,
Not to be fools by halves.

49 They shew their splendour, great and high,
That we may raptur'd stare,
And that our little souls may cry,
'Oh dear! how rich they are!'

50 What folly here to look for taste!
'Tis more than gold can buy;
Of wealth indeed there is a waste,
But for the tasteless eye.

51 To them our envy and our praise
Are pretty near the same;
Yet our vulgarity at gaze
They poorly take for fame.

52 Who, by himself, to heaven will go,
And climb the lonely road,
Which upward treads thro' Alps of snow,
Deserted by the mode?

53 Who would not righteous strive to be,
If all men righteous were?
Or who hath sense enough to see,
When all men blindly err.

54 A singularity, tho' good,
The mode will not endure,
But takes it for a crazy mood,
Which bedlam cannot cure.

55 Yet, what can pride or fashion do
For their devoted slave,
But set him up for knaves to woo,
The fool of every knave?

56 When to the grave this fool goes down,
And ends his gaudy day,
What's left for glory or a crown?
A stinking lump of clay.

57 At fashion in its gaudy pride,
'Tis certain all the while,
Amidst his strut and haughty stride,
Death grins a ghastly smile.

58 Yet to the fashion of the times
The sexes both submit,
And live in folly, or in crimes,
Or both, as he thinks fit.

59 To fashion, as their god, they bow,
And low obedience pay;
From prince to beggar, they allow
No higher power to sway.

60 Their eating, drinking, he prescribes,
Their sleeping, dressing, rules:
The courts of all the human tribes
Are kept but as his schools.

61 Religion, reason, nature, now
Are banish'd from the great;
Down from the sceptre to the plough,
In this all aim at state.

62 Sin, sickness, pain, and death ensue,
While fashion leads the train,
Eve's flaunting children to subdue
To his fastidious reign.

63 Yes, duellists from fashion draw
Of death, the dreadful sting;
The lawless gamesters own his law,
Of honour crown him king.

64 From him the pistol takes its charge,
The sword, its foining art,
While death invited stalks at large,
Or triumphs in his cart.

65 Two haughty fools, not satisfy'd,
That their opprobrious words,
Which is the scoundrel, can decide,
Must try it with their swords.

66 No greater cowards ever shook
At death's approach than these:
At his most mild and distant look
Their shivering bosoms freeze.

67 But fashion loudly clamours, 'fight,'
'By no means,' cries their fear;
Yet still, that fashion dictates right,
Honour insists, is clear.

68 Honour! what honour can accrue
From sense of honour feign'd,
Or stupid courage, justly too
Of cowardice arraigned?

69 Can they despise both life and death,
And wish that both were past,
As if the first were but a breath
The second, but a blast?

70 Asham'd alike of prayer and dram,
To both they steal recourse;
Then fiercely swagger, curse, and damn,
A furious air to force.

71 Yet for the sheriff anxious long,
And wistful look around
Forget the insult, slight the wrong,
As they behold their ground.

72 Pray, don't recall them, for they go
To dissipate your fear.
'Tis dang'rous all their neighbours know,
To live within their sphere.

73 Who in a steeple, near the bell,
Would wish to make his bed ?
Who in a powder-mill would dwell,
Who elsewhere had a shed ?

74 The caitiffs go as desperate men,
Insur'd by priest and pope ;
Yet either, if he comes again,
Should cost the king a rope.

75 Two sorts of infidels are found,
Who accident advance
Into the place of God, and ground
Their wish and hope on chance.

76 The first is of that atheist head,
Which thinks, no plan was laid
For this creation, but, instead,
The world by chance was made ;

77 The second, of that atheist heart,
Which would exclude all rule
Of Providence, but his own art
To catch and fleece the fool.

78 By gaming this is brought about,
That most atrocious vice,
Which fashion, at the drum and rout,
Adores in cards and dice.

79 To these and such assemblies now
The great and rich repair ;
To chance, their God, obsequious bow,
And pay their offerings there.

80 The same devotion sharpers too,
Like hypocrites, pretend,
But, 'midst the dolts, by art pursue
With sure success their end.

81 Here villany, with honour join'd,
A motley commerce make:
The duke and scoundrel, here combin'd,
One common spoil partake.

82 The gambler's triumph here is great,
But greater still the woe,
Which falls upon the dupes too late
To ward a final blow.

83 Who pities them, for they too came
Like Atheists to the play,
Bunglers, who scarcely knew the game,
Yet vainly hop'd for prey?

84 And now abandon'd to distress,
Distraction and despair,
Seek by the pistol late redress
From wants they cannot bear?

85 The winner and the loser too
Deserve one common end;
Narcotic hemp to all the crew
Should prove an equal friend.

86 To these each obvious bough is free,
If they can buy a string;
But those, adown the legal tree,
Have merited a swing.

87 As nature is by fashion chang'd,
So hath religion been
By this usurper more derang'd
In person, and in mien.

88 Too much it is, that fashion reigns
O'er our external frame;
But when within we feel his chains,
Religion's but a name.

89 The present fashion cools our hearts
To God, and in our minds
To all our principles imparts
The fickleness of winds;

90 At virtue now impels the dart
Of wit's satyric sneer;
Now at the weak unguarded heart
The meretricious leer.

91 The milliners of dress and wit
Sufficient store supply
Each foible, and each mode to hit,
Of either heart or eye.

92 Religion is that standard dress,
Which on the wearer ought
Its beauteous figure to impress,
In every deed and thought.

93 Some suit this garment to their shape,
Some suit themselves to it;
These last from thence much honour reap,
And o'er high Agag sit.

94 The former, as too often seen,
This beauteous robe distort
To their foul figure, which hath been
Of botching fiends the sport.

95 Hence of this garb a wardrobe made
By fashion, now supplies
Our hypocritic masquerade
With all sorts of disguise.

96 Hence every heresy and vice,
Indulg'd by Christian folk,
Can at a very moderate price
Assume a mask and cloak.

97 Some little whitish patch retain'd,
Gives credit to the rest,
Though deep with black or scarlet stain'd,
And sully'd at the best.

98 Look these, at all, like wedding-clothes,
Thou tailor of deceit?
Or on the lamb can these impose,
Should masquers on him wait?

99 From this and that opinion's blow,
And waft us where they list;
From something or from nothing grow,
And bourgeon in a mist.

100 Absurd, nay wicked, sure he is,
At vanity agape,
Who quits th' unerring path to bliss
A multitude to ape.

101 Fashion with faith hath interfer'd,
And now presumes to guide,
As rather more to be rever'd,
And fitter to decide.

102 If now and then a truth prevails
'Tis but for fashion's sake,
And on our minds but poorly steals,
As begging leave to take.

103 For thy most pure and holy word,
Establish'd in these lands,
What small respect is shewn, O Lord,
What cool professor stands?

104 The pastor skulks behind a creed,
Which he himself betrays;
Faith dies, and truth begins to bleed
By his ambiguous phrase.

145 These prophets false, in sheep's array,
With honey'd words and smiles,
Come forth to point a devious way,
Beset with snares and wiles.

106 For sheep unwary spread the mesh,
Of art and murder full;
First, like a wolf, devour the flesh,
Then clothe them with the wool.

107 The Lord that bought them they deny;
And trample on his blood;
His saving merits they decry,
And vaunt their own as good.

108 Faith by the martyr's blood is bought;
He speaks the truth, and dies:
Is honesty by falsehood taught?
Is truth convey'd in lies?

109 They're heard with pleasure by a crowd,
Who for deception wish;
The haughty palate of the proud
Disdains a plainer dish.

110 Errors, that give a latitude
To actions vile and base,
That stifle every sense of good,
We welcome and embrace.

111 At nothing these new teachers strain;
All articles and creeds
Go down the gullet wide of gain,
As worldly wisdom speeds.

112 Unguided, or misguided, hence
The flock, of light bereft,
And keenly feeling its expense,
In wilderness is left.

113 More from our income than our creed
(Creeds now are nothing thought)
The layman wishes to be freed,
And better fed than taught.

114 If we, religious Pilates, fail
To shun the rocks and shelves,
Don't, laymen, therefore at us rail,
Lest you rail at yourselves.

115 We all were laymen once, 'tis plain,
All priests by you were made.
Your stuff and choice you must arraign
When you our faults implaid.

116 Our king, our fathers, laymen all,
(Whom needs we must obey)
For this employment gave the call
To us when purely lay.

117 Your worthless brood into the church
You thrust for impious bread;
These leave her doctrines in the lurch,
And dire opinions spread.

118 Thus I too on the sacred place
Unworthily intrude,
As destitute, I fear, of grace,
As neither wise, nor good.

119 Why rail you then? or why indeed
Should you, so very wise,
So poorly form your counter-creed
On our misdeeds or lies?

120 Why thus so stupidly inhale,
Of your own fallacies,
The putrid and infectious gale,
As a salubrious breeze?

121 Yet some good pastors still remain
Of character sublime,
Who resolutely truth maintain,
And brave the scythe of time.

122 Religious truth no more desires,
Than silence in the rest,
No farther hopes for, nor requires,
Than negligence, at best.

123 You see from hence corruption springs,
And purjury assumes
The civil power of states and kings,
And flaunts it in their plumes.

124 In conversation, commerce, law,
You see, these bear the rule,
And grasp with a rapacious paw,
The weak, the poor, the fool.

125 Nay, not content to see alone,
The cucumbers you praise,
Which in this hot-bed of your own,
You take good care to raise.

126 Resume that wealth, ye worldly crew,
Which you pretend you gave;
Take back your haughty offspring too,
Who preach, but to deceive.

127 Proud priest, did Christ to poverty,
And to contempt descend,
That you in pride and luxury
Your ill-got wealth may spend?

128 How soon shall you, in flannel gown,*
Experience a reverse,
And for a splendid coach, go down
In an old hackney hearse!

129 Nay, yet far worse, that haughty head
To lower depths shall sink,
And, midst th' offscourings of the dead,
Thy treach'rous soul shall stink.

130 This church and land, O Lord, I love,
And as my mothers prize;
To me that opens joys above,
This life and food supplies.

* The Irish all bury in Flannel.

131 Of both my mothers, now distrest,
How shall I bear the pain!
How see them wantonly opprest,
Betray'd, perhaps and slain!

132 By all the sons, which they brought forth,
Whom they have nurs'd and fed,
They're trodden down, as nothing worth,
Tho' yet supplying bread.

133 What none to pity their gray hairs,
Of all that stand around!
Behold, O Lord, not one prepares
To lift them from the ground!

134 Nay, all concur to taunt their woes,
(All sons, as well as I!)
Rejoice to aggravate their throes,
To see them gasp, and die!

135 The greater vulgar now affect
Religion to despise,
And fashion helps them to respect
For this, in vulgar eyes.

136 The purblind vulgar, lower plac'd,
Look hither for the mode,
And, 'midst the coaches, are in haste
To foot the broader road.

137 Both pour forth nonsense in such streams
On each religious point,
That nor in madness, nor in dreams,
Is thought so out of joint.

138 Yet here, if ever surely men
Should clearly think and speak;
If not, what is the tongue or pen?
A buzzard, or a snake.

139 How much alive, how keen are we
In law-suits, loss, and gain!
For God we neither hear, nor see,
Or hear and see in vain.

140 Be not conform'd to worldly ways,
The Holy Ghost hath said;
But, be conform'd, each fashion says—
And fashion is obey'd.

141 Now heathen gods, or wicked saints,
Or black-ey'd maids arise,
As fashion, or as fancy paints,
And people all the skies.

142 No longer on Olympus high
These deities shall sit;
A new seat Etna shall supply,
More similar and fit.

143 Their pilgrims here may snow or fire,
As either shall succeed,
Enjoy with them, and with their sire,
Their ague fits to feed.

144 Devotion, whether hot or cold,
Here fashionists may feel;
And should it chance to be too old,
Its age in smoke may veil.

145 Empedocles, to be among
Such gods as they adore,
Himself into mount Etna flung—
Our fashionists do more.

146 Like him, their bodies they consume
In worse than Etna's fires,
And boast in death the crackling plume
Of criminal desires;

147 Wherewith their souls, enkindl'd here,
Like lighted torches, there
In flaming brimstone shall appear
T' outdo their present glare.

148 These even now their lava pour,
And spread a general woe;
Corrupt, oppress, and then devour
Whatever lies below.

149 How far his slaves may fashion drive;
If he shall tyrannize;
In his warm worship we shall strive
O'er God himself to rise.

150 Into the house of God we go
Our fashions to display,
Ourselves and boasted wealth to shew
On a pretence to pray.

151 Great God! how impious to thy face
This insult offer'd here!
The fiend of pride in this thy place
Presumes to domineer.

152 Even in the pulpit takes his stand
By millinery vote,
And holds in fashionable band
Thy preacher by the throat.

153 Well were it tho', had fashion been
Contented here to stop,
Ere jaded patience must have seen
The villain in the fop;

154 Ere by this monster Christ our Lord,
Who bought and feeds him well,
Had been accus'd from his own word
Of falsehood black as hell.

155 This pastor preaches as he lives,
And howsover odd,
A god in his own image gives,
A fashionable god.

156 A god polite, who will not scan
In too severe a scale
The actions of a gentleman,
Excusable, if frail.

157 Nay, howsoever it may sound,
Or monstrous it may be,
Such preachers diff'rent gods propound,
And this hath two or three.

158 A group of gods tho' he maintains,
He really worships none:
Of soul the being he arraigns,
And reprobates his own.

159 As this what can appear so foul,
When openly disclos'd?
But why should he retain a soul,
To black accounts expos'd?

160 Yet such good men for Christ declare,
And seem for him to stand.
Are they not honest? sure they are,
If by their hearers scan'd;

161 Unless these hearers, always blind,
Now wish to be misled,
And, for old truths, to vice unkind,
With pleasing errors fed.

162 Distinctions now are never made,
But of the great and small:
Religion would the great degrade,
And death-like level all.

163 How despicable is that wretch
Whose highest excellence
He strives from mimic'd faults to fetch,
From mimic'd lack of sense!

164 In whose esteem can he look brave,
What honour can he claim,
Who borrows from the fool or knave
His sole pretence to fame?

165 Fashion cries out, '*Go down the stream,*
And do as others do.
In crowds they travel; do the same,
And herd not with the few.

166 *Of lords and ladies I am king,*
Nay kings and queens obey
My sov'reign lore, and to me bring
The ensigns of my sway.

167 *You have no other gods but me,*
And such as I depute;
My powers of comb and needle fee;
'Tis theirs to push your suit.

168 *Ye splendid votaries of mine,*
Too well I know your zeal
To urge a cause, wherein you shine
So bright from head to tail.

169 *Go on, as long as money lasts,*
To flaunt it every day;
But keep to me your literal fasts,
If fortune frowns at play.

170 *If any sneaking fool low-born,*
But those I constitute,
Should preach up plainness, treat with scorn
The despicable brute.

171 *Of figure he is not less fond*
Than you, could he afford,
By robbery, or dice, or bond,
T' assume the prince or lord.

172 *Take care you ne'er apostatize*
From me to Christ or grace;
No, on my splendour fix your eyes,
My diamonds, gold, and lace.

173 *Damp not your spirits with a thought*
Of sickness or the grave;
At least, when they approach unsought,
Do you the phantoms brave.

174 *Tho' all as criminals must die,*
Yet ye in pomp shall fall;
My livery for death is high,
And pride supports the pall.

175 *O death, how splendid is the dress,*
When viewed on the parade,
Of those, who thy employ profess
Of murder for a trade.

176 *Should you at any time submit*
To those uncouth events,
Elude the filthy vulgar pit
By splendid monuments;

177 *Thus you your grandeur may protract*
By efforts all your own;
May death's inflictor counteract
And haughty look in stone.

178 *Your marble coat shall for you lie,*
As did your silken dress;
And every passenger shall cry,
Death could not make them less.

179 *To bully death you find the way,*
By me in spite of fate,
To look in shrouds both great and gay,
Perfum'd and laid in state.

180 *The sermonizing parson hires,*
Insurance for your souls,
Against the fear of penal fires,
And you with saints enrols.

181 *By these expedients I shall still*
Maintain an empire there
(Where death himself no more can kill),
Which nothing can impair.

182 *Death grins at me; I grin at him,*
And at his sting of sin;
But, look he howsoever grim,
I'll give him grin for grin.'

HYMN TO GOD,

ON THE FOREGOING SUBJECT OF THE PRESENT TIMES AND FASHIONS.

183 O SPRING of being, and resource
Of all things thou hast made,
To thee distress'd we have recourse,
To thee apply for aid.

184 Once more, Almighty Lord, descend,
These mischiefs to remove,
Our faith and morals to amend
And warm us with thy love.

185 Recall our hearts to thee once more
Thou fountain of all good;
Teach us our riches to deplore,
Unworthy even of food.

186 Break forth, O Lord, and cause thy face
Again on us to shine;
Let tears again recall thy grace,
And own us still for thine.

187 Correct us, but with judgment, Lord,
Not in thy wrath, tho' just,
Lest, crush'd to nothing by thy sword,
We shrink to less than dust.

188 O King of kings, and God of all,
Whose power hath overthrown
Astarte, Astoroth, and Baal,
And trod all idols down;

189 Thou, who hast clear'd the earth and skies,
And not one demon left,
To whom mankind may sacrifice,
Of common sense bereft;

190 Beneath whose hand the gods of lust,
Of drunk'nness, theft, and blood,
Have crouch'd, and vanquish'd into dust,
As toys of stone and wood;

191 Fashion, who still thy kingdom braves,
Insults thy chast'ning rod:
O'erwhelm, O Lord, this slave of slaves,
This despicable god.

192 Arise, Almighty God, arise,
Dissolve this magic spell;
And open thou in time our eyes,
Ere we awake in hell.

193 Arise, Almighty Son, arise
This dragon's head to bruise,
This hell-born rebel to chastise,
Who all things here subdues.

194 Let loose thy thunders, mighty Lord,
To strike this monster dead;
Nature and virtue will accord
To bare his impious head.

195 Thou know'st, it is alone by wealth,
That he his empire gains;
By fraud, oppression, and by stealth,
That he his wealth maintains.

196 Down, blessed Lord, down strike them all,
Oppress'd religion cries;
To poverty grant us a fall,
That we may fall to rise.

197 Let us no longer, Lord, thy gifts
Embrace, and thus abuse;
No longer seek for senseless shifts,
Our conscience to amuse.

198 So shall our hearts to thee return,
Arous'd and thus set free,
That they in piety may burn,
And flame anew to thee.

199 The modes of thy celestial court
To study we shall strive,
And by our deeds those modes support,
That they may spread and thrive.

200 By poverty, that humble nurse
Of virtue, we shall rise,
High o'er the envied rich man's curse,
To wealth above the skies.

201 Curs'd be those blessings, which on fools
Produce effects so dire.
What is the learning of their schools,
But lust and pride on fire?

202 Nowhere on earth the Christian light
So clearly shines, as here;
Yet, as at first, infernal night
Forbids it to appear.

203 Since by this light no mortal moves
This lamp, this light divine,
But each man rather darkness loves,
Why should it longer shine?

204 Yet Lord, this saving light prolong,
By which the blind man sees,
Still as refulgent, still as strong,
For better times than these.

205 Put thy protecting hand about
This thy own glorious lamp,
Lest windy doctrines puff it out;
Here once again encamp.

206 O Holy Ghost, fresh oil instil,
And trim this lamp anew
To warm, and yet reguide, the will
By knowledge safe and true.

207 As solar light and heat still flow
In one united ray;
O sun of souls, on us bestow
Of both the mental day.

208 Thus guided up the arduous steep,
And prompted by thy grace,
We neither shall descend, nor sleep,
But upward mend our pace.

209 O source of fire with hearts of ice,
And with a victim lame,
How can we offer sacrifice,
Or make it upward flame?

210 Let piety, O Lord, revive,
And on some future day
Again return, and all alive,
Its light and warmth display.

211 So shall our minds its lustre own,
Our hearts its vigour feel,
And godless rebels, humble grown,
To thee devoutly kneel.

212 Their souls shall at its ardour fuse,
And in a godlike mould
Take a new figure, not like Jews,
Tenacious of the old;

213 Nor yet, like fickle slaves of mode,
Each new opinion seize,
Nor, these to prove, thy sacred code
In every passage teaze.

214 To smattering fops, and empty beaus,
Religion adds some shreds,
Which thread of gold but loosely sews
To airy coxcombs heads.

215 Their utmost wealth can scarcely buy
For literary daws
(A cheat discern'd by every eye)
The plumage of macaws.

216 What, wedded with religious truth,
Can wealth or fashion breed,
But the corruption of our youth
In conduct and in creed?

217 When wealth and fashion once shall fly
To hell from whence they came,
We'll build on plainness, and build high,
A great and deathless fame.

218 Then joyful we a final leave
Of disbelief shall take,
Shall to thy precepts strongly cleave,
For theirs and our own sake.

219 Our robes of glory, then how bright!
How high shall nod our plume,
When we for ribbons, beams of light,
For diamonds, stars assume.

220 Tear off the love of pomp and pelf,
Display'd in every toy;
Clothe us, O Jesus, with thyself,
Thou glorious robe of joy.

221 Elijah's chariot then shall wait
To waft us to the court,
Where majesty supremely great,
Maintains celestial port.

222 Or we poor worms, now wound in thread,
Shall burst our silken strings,
And thither soar, by love upled,
On our own purple wings.

HOW GREAT AND GOOD IS GOD.

1 O Lord, when I behold on high
The sun, the moon, the starry sky
And all the worlds around;
Snail-like I shrink into my shell
All self-importance soon dispel,
And grovel on the ground.

2 But when my soul resumes the thought,
That from the empty womb of nought
These things by thee were call'd;
That in thy sight they're little things,
In thine, thou glorious King of kings,
How is my soul appall'd!

3 All these by one creative word,
Pronounc'd by thee, Almighty Lord,
Arose, and may again
By one destructive word of thine,
To their primeval nought decline,
The creature then how vain!

4 But when the mind its kindred claims,
With that illustrious list of names,
Which stand about thy throne;
How soon the sun and starry host
Are to its mental eyesight lost,
As beings quite unknown!

5 Ten thousand suns in one conjoin'd,
Escape the inattentive mind,
When Michael shews his face;
To virtue what is solar light,
Which sheds a beam, by far less bright,
If virtue comes in place?

6 If, rising on a bolder wing,
Attempting thee, O Lord, to sing,
Thy face I faintly see;
Archangels then must stand aside,
And all their faded glories hide,
Absorb'd and lost in thee.

7 So far as we can understand
The works of thy almighty hand,
Our wonder they excite;
Yet all we ever saw or heard,
To nothing sink, with thee compar'd,
O thou sole infinite!

8 The waters saw thee, Lord, and fled,
And open left their sandy bed,
A dry way thro' the sea;
Thy touch the hills and mountains feel,
And at thy look they start, they reel,
They smoke and melt away.

9 The earth, and all that it contains,
The heavens, with all their azure plains,
Fly from before thy face;
And if thy looks but gently chide,
In ancient nothing seek to hide;
But trembling find no place.

10 For who or what can hide from thee,
In heaven, or hell, or earth, or sea,
Since thou art every where?
All hell lies open to thy sight,
Thou see'st throughout its darkest night,
Its bones, or fiends, lie bare.

11 Thy power, thy wisdom, both have been
In this thy grand creation seen
And both unbounded prov'd;
Thy mercy in redemption too,
Is not less ample, nor less true,
Nor thou more fear'd than lov'd.

12 Thou art not God in power alone,
Nor wisdom only; no, we own
Thee God, in mercy too;
That only boundless mercy can,
With patience bear the rebel man,
All mankind feel it true.

13 Man finds it true indeed full well,
Who is not yet compell'd to dwell
In everlasting flame;
Tho' he, provoking wretch! proceeds
To brave thee with atrocious deeds,
Too foul to bear a name.

14 Repentance, even yet propos'd,
Keeps pity's folding door unclos'd,
For this abandon'd wretch;
'He is but dust,' his Saviour cries;
'I'll spare him yet,' his God replies.
Of mercy what a stretch!

15 Now let thy power creation boast,
And tell thy wisdom to the host
Of hymning sprites above;
A louder lay may mankind raise,
To sing thy patience, and to praise
Thy mercy and thy love.

16 From heaven's high throne the Saviour comes,
Secures of all our debts the sums.
By boundless mercy drawn;
He pledges for us his own blood,
To make our cause in justice good;
How infinite the pawn!

17 Christ all the prophecies fulfils,
And executes whate'er he wills;—
Nature it's God obeys.
The chains of darkness he unbinds,
And pours true daylight on our minds,
In a full tide of rays.

18 The angels saw him quit the throne,
And make our nature all his own,
But doubted to what end;
And when they saw his vital breath
Forsake him in the throes of death,
Beheld us slay our friend;

19 Beheld us in his blood imbru'd,
And Satan by that blood subdu'd,
And all our sins aton'd;
They then the mystery understood,
Saw life eternal in his blood,
And his salvation owned.

20 Triumphant in the bloody strife,
They saw him rise again to life,
And take his kingly crown;
The crown that decks the King of kings,
And with it sole dominion brings,
And hymns of loud renown.

21 But when they saw us take the field,
Arm'd with his conquering sword and shield,
And by his Spirit fir'd;
Then were their golden harps new strung,
Then heaven with their hosannas rung,
With songs anew inspir'd.

22 Christ is to God the upward way,
The truth, the life, the perfect day,
The beauteous path of peace;
If faith unshaken in the soul,
If virtue steadfast as the pole,
Thro' him their course shall trace.

23 Behold an open road to heaven!
And if repented, sin forgiven
Thro' Christ's atoning blood!
Arise thou drooping heart, with tears
Of joy cry out, adieu my fears,
Adieu to all, but good,

24 True good alone I hence shall know,
Altho' in penitential woe
The harbinger of bliss;
My soul dissolves in gratitude,
While I receive the heavenly food,
And while the Son I kiss.

25 To hope of heaven from deep despair,
My soaring spirits now repair,
In strong distaste of vice;
The blood of Christ hath bought my soul,
(In that red laver let me roll),
My God, at what a price!

26 My soul, devoted to thy praise,
O Lord, in these my feeble lays
Attempts a weak return,
But, O cherubic choir above,
What love shall I return for love!
My heart, how should it burn!

27 O for your raptur'd soul of fire!
The loud acclaim of such a choir!
That I like you might sing;
Yet, tho' I could, my song sublime
Would only stammer out, in rhyme
The tribute I should bring.

28 Had I a voice, so loud and shrill
That it could space unbounded fill,
And make all nature hear;
Too far I could not make it fly,
Nor sound the praise of Christ too high,
Who died my debt to clear.

29 From sin to sin I headlong fell,
And trembled on the brink of hell,
When Christ to save me ran;
From joy to death the Saviour came
To snatch me from th' infernal flame,
Adjudg'd to sinful man.

30 When the last trumpet shall resound,
And call the universe around
The tribunitial throne;
Canst thou, O man, in judgment stand,
And glory of thy God demand
On righteousness thy own?

31 If not, a saviour thou must find
Of wealth sufficient, and so kind,
To make up thy account;
To spunge thy debtor side away,
Of his own funds thy fines to pay,
And clear the full amount.

32 But all the creatures, high and low,
The arduous office must forego,
And let this work alone.
Thro' none, but God, the soul can live,
The creature hath not ought to give,
Hath nothing of his own.

33 When God in Jesus once is felt,
The heart with gratitude must melt
Before his fire of love.
Thus is the Saviour born in man;
This lengthens out our little span
To endless life above.

34 Thus love for love, now flaming high,
From us to him shall upward fly,
Expelling sins and fears;
Away with guilt! away its chain
Of boding horrors! and its train
Of anxious doubts and tears!

35 Lo now the dancing spirits rise!
We breathe not air, but purer skies,
And heaven is felt within!
The soul now sees its smiling God!
And now no longer dreads his rod;
Now endless joys begin!

36 With what an horror would it damp,
With what a mark infernal stamp
The soul, that Christ should sell
For wealth, and on that blood should tread
(Which for this very wretch was shed),
And league again with hell!

37 Can we be led by fiends or flesh
To crucify our Lord afresh,
Expos'd to open shame?
Again, like Judas, Christ betray,
On a new cross, like Pilot, slay,
And carry still his name?

38 A Judas surely is that wretch,
Who with a conscience on the stretch,
Can Christ's religion kiss;
And yet renounce it in his deeds,
And at its principles and creeds
With scorn affected hiss.

39 The devil, who down from heaven fell,
Down to the dark abyss of hell,
Had not a fall so sore,
As he who Christ the Saviour sells,
Tho' here in consequence, he dwells
'Midst worldly pomp and store.

40 I will not, Judas, with thee share
Thy price of blood, nor thy despair,
Thy silver nor thy rope;
No, rather, Stephen, let my head,
Receive the stone that struck thee dead!
And thus expire in hope.

41 Hail glorious deacon! who first trod
Thy Saviour's bloody path to God,
And pour'd the crimson flood
Of life for him, who from the tree
Discharg'd the blood of God for thee;
In thine was blood for blood.

42 This sacrifice, so great, so good,
To pay thy debt of gratitude,
In thy account too small;
Yet for his righteous cause to die,
Was by the Saviour reckon'd high,
Because it was thy all.

43 To give thee courage in this fight,
And furnish with sufficient might,
The curtains of the sky
Aside are drawn, and lo! the throne,
The empyreal throne is shewn
To thy admiring eye.

44 There sits your Saviour, King of kings!
There round him hallelujah rings,
Almost unheeded, while
He eyes the stones that o'er thee pour,
And, thro' the fierce, the deadly shower,
Looks on thee with a smile.

45 That smile converts thy keenest pains
To raptures, and what then remains,
But triumph to thy soul?
He beckons thee above the skies;
He points to thee the glorious prize,
The Christian racer's goal.

46 Now, cruel Jews, go fling your stones,
Go pound the Christian hero's bones;
His Saviour stands above,
Knows, your infernal rage, your noise,
And blows, do but augment his joys,
But sooth and stroke his love.

47 O Marius, Sylla, Cæsar, know
How poor your triumphs, and how low,
With kings and gods in chains,
Compar'd to his who from this war
Leads captive fiends behind his car,
And more than victor reigns.

48 Behold him, from your dark abode
Ascend the bright celestial road,
Triumphant toward the throne;
Then hear his welcome thence proclaim'd,
And see him protomartyr nam'd
Upon the corner stone.

49 To thee, like Stephen, we repair,
Thou source of strength; O hear the prayer
Which dust and ashes raise;
That strength, which we so greatly want,
Do thou, Almighty Goodness, grant
And thine shall be the praise.

50 Of nature feeble and deprav'd,
We wretches never can be sav'd,
Unless by thee alone;
Thy strength by weakness perfect made,
In us so weak, if thus display'd,
Shall prove itself thy own.

51 Thy miracles of mercy shine
Above thy works, howe'er divine,
In thy creation seen;
We there on power and wisdom gaze;
Here mercy, mercy, mercy praise,
Of attributes the queen.

52 Our gratitude the song demands
From us, who pierc'd thy feet and hands,
To sin and death enslav'd
Whom thou hast sav'd from endless woe,
From shame and pain in flames below;
Both sanctify'd and sav'd.

53 High heaven before the Almighty shakes,
This pond'rous globe beneath him quakes,
Hell trembles at his nod;
To man, he says, 'repent and live;
'Behold, for thee my blood I give!'
How great and good is God!

54 O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Whose service we, as Christians, boast,
Eternal Three in One;
All glory now and ever be
In all our hymns ascrib'd to thee,
Thee, thee, our God alone.

MAN SINKING INTO A DEVIL.

1 O Lord, how hath thy creature fall'n,
Thy creature once a man!
How to a brute in thought and deed,
Then to a demon, ran!

2 He plunges on from crime to crime
And round him forms a gulf
Of filth and blood, and there outdoes
The swine, the fox, the wolf.

3 Then blackens to a fiend as soon
As he acquires the art,
Fiend-like to spoil, and then torment
The desolated heart.

4 He basely tramples o'er the man
Who rais'd him from the dust;
And substituting wrong for right,
Exterminates the just.

5 He and his instruments combine
The poor to fleece and tear;
All round him desolation reigns,
Reign anguish, and despair.

6 The innocent he dooms to death,
His path in blood is seen;
He teaches perjury, and boasts,
The murderer to screen.

7 By no remorse this monster stung,
Nor God, nor mankind fears;
Hears not the beggar'd orphan's cries,
Nor sees the widow's tears.

8 In courts where others justice seek,
He buys or sells the laws;
And from these gross enormities
No little profit draws.

9 Him all the trembling wretches round
Fear, flatter, and implore;
And all attend with sacrifice
This devil to adore.

10 Their substance, liberties, and lives,
At his devotion lie;
Their consciences with his designs,
However black, comply.

11 From him thy weaker creatures save,
And quash his impious power;
Be thou to him a chast'ning God,
To them a rock and tower.

12 Remember he's thy creature still,
Didst thou not for him bleed?
O let not his transgressions, Lord,
Thy tenderness exceed.

13 Almighty Lord restore this wretch,
To thy eternal praise;
From fiend to brute, from brute to man,
From man to angel raise.

14 In falling down so far is lost
All power in him to rise;
His will in hard impenitence
Not less disabl'd lies.

15 Thy power alone this reprobate
Is able to recall,
Let power and mercy lift him up
From this so desp'rate fall.

16 Let him, a second David, Lord,
Thy power and mercy feel;
Let him, like Paul, an heart of flesh
Receive for one of steel.

17 So shall this firebrand snatch'd from hell,
In paradise take root;
And flourish by the tree of life,
In leaves, in flowers, in fruit.

18 Then disappointed hell shall rage;
Then joyful seraphs sing
The wondrous power and mercy shewn
By their all-gracious king.

19 What angel then, in all thy host,
So loudly shall proclaim
Thy wisdom, power, and mercy, Lord?
So glorify thy name?

MAN RISING INTO AN ANGEL.

1 A better sacrifice he brings,
Than these too languid lays;
O Lord, who in his actions sings
Thy mind to thy own praise;

2 Who to the widow life prolongs,
And to her starving brood,
Whose kind heart dances to her songs
For clothing and for food.

3 Her song, O Lord, to thee resounds,
Let boundless goodness hear;
His dance of love to thee rebounds,
And trembles in his tear.

4 The song and dance, in David's days,
We read, thou didst approve
As acts of worship; here to please
They sing, they dance, they love.

5 Here piety and love are felt
In acts of sweet relief;
Here more than Saba's odours smelt
In joy, succeeding grief.

6 Here sense of tenderness and joy
Hath taught the tears to flow;
These too the heart-felt dance employ,
And lend it all their glow,

7 Does he not hymn his God who pleads
The cause of the oppress'd;
And raises up their drooping heads
For whom that God is bless'd?

8 Does he not incense thee who saves
The foe that sought his life;
Who 'midst his angry neighbours leaves
No source of wrath or strife?

9 Does he not sacrifice to thee,
Who on thine altar burns,
For faith and truth, an offering free,
While pain and death he spurns?

10 Thy higher angels dwell in bliss,
And serve thee with delight;
O see the services of this,
Who serves in blood and fight.

11 Arm, gracious God, this champion arm,
Sustain him with thy hand;
With persevering ardour warm,
And bid him bravely stand.

12 High is thine hand, and strong thine helm,
O stretch them o'er his head,
Lest his inveterate foes o'erwhelm,
And sink him to the dead.

13 The powers of hell and earth combine
His strength to overthrow;
For thy just cause, O lend him thine,
Is not his foe thy foe?

14 Behold with zeal for thee he glows,
And in the martyr's flame
Ascending, his example throws
For all who love thy name.

15 Angels themselves by him outdone,
To lower love aspire;
Elijah's chariot here outshone,
Burns with a fainter fire.

16 From this hard warfare to thy praise,
He ashes brings, for scars;
And wrapt in his own proper blaze,
He soars, and dims the stars.

THE BIBLE.

1 The Lord instructs us by his works,
Throughout the world display'd,
To know his wisdom and his power
By that which he hath made;

2 To hear him in the thunder speak,
To taste him in our food;
To see him in the heavenly lights—
In all, to feel him good.

3 All these express him to our souls,
In language of his own;
Yet to our stupid souls by these
He hath been little known.

4 In pity to our want of thought,
Lo he, himself to preach,
Descends, and in the speech of men
Draws near, our minds to teach;

5 In lisping language, as to babes,
Divine instruction pours;
O how to human sense it bends!
And yet sublimely towers!

6 He came not to a splendid court,
But in a manger lay;
He speaks not in a pompous style
To wretched sons of clay.

7 Poor are the writings of mankind,
In words and phrases prim,
Whose beauties, little more than sounds,
Upon the surface swim.

8 Here sentiments, divinely great,
Divinely strong and bright,
In common words bespeak the God,
Who writes with beams of light.

9 What countless terrors here at guilt
With hideous aspect stare!
How ravishingly sweet thy smiles,
O Lord, on virtue, there!

10 We burn, we freeze, we joy, we grieve,
Almost on every page;
Sensation here to passion swells,
There, wrath at sin, to rage;

11 At my own sins, I only mean,
Not at my neighbour's faults;
He totters, where I tumble down;
I fall, where he but halts.

12 This book of God in light reveals
The errors of the mind;
This, in a moment, dissipates
The darkness of the blind.

13 How it enkindles faith and hope,
Where brooded deep despair!
How lifts the soul above this life!
Above its joy and care!

14 How in the harden'd conscience works
A lively sense of sin!
How teaches the old man to die,
And a new life begin!

15 Ah, how our melted hearts in tears
It's soothing power confess!
And feeling, fly to the relief
Of anguish and distress!

16 Whence, o'er the heart this wondrous power,
Tho' destitute of art?
'Tis God himself indites the book,
That God, who made the heart.

17 In this, thy book, we thee embrace,
Our great and only good;
Here kindling at thy goodness, Lord,
We glow in gratitude.

18 How trembling at that awful day,
When thou shalt doom to hell
All that unhappy tribe, who once
From faith and virtue fell.

19 How we transporting hopes erect
On this thy gracious word;
'Come thou, partake the endless joy,
And triumph of thy Lord.'

20 How we the Saviour meet and hear,
Who our salvation brings;
How we the dove descending see,
With healing in his wings.

21 How, Lord, we know thee, and ourselves,
And clearly see our way;
We, who in utter darkness sat,
Or only went astray.

22 In every clause we see a lamp,
In every text a light
Which teacheth us thro' nature's gloom,
And snares, to tread aright

23 From Ceylon's or Amboyna's fields
No gently breathing gale,
(As we from this thy spicy book)
Such odours can exhale.

24 From Eden's richly loaded trees
No fruits like these were pull'd;
From Carmel's, or from Tabor's flowers,
No sweets like these were cull'd.

25 The winged chymist never stor'd
So exquisite a sweet,
As these, which pouring from thy page,
Our purer palates greet.

26 Thy book we therefore warmly seize,
And in our arms enfold;
This, living, dying, to our hearts,
With eager grasp we hold.

27 Farewel, thou world of sin and fear,
Ye wealth and pomp, adieu;
We take of pleasure, here below,
A loathing farewel too.

28 To thee, bless'd volume, we resort,
Where every thing is read,
Which can engage, reclaim, instruct,
The mind, the heart, the head.

29 In thee my God, vouchsafes to speak
To me, the child of dust,
A wayward, but a willing child;
I listen, and I trust.

30 And as I listen, firmer build,
And trusting, safer stand
On him, my adamantine rock,
Than on my former sand.

31 'O abdicate thy sins,' he cries;
I abdicate them all;
And, rising on celestial wings,
Now tower above this ball.

32 'Deny thyself,' he says, and I,
A better self to find,
Repose in him my every wish,
My will, my heart, my mind.

33 But, if I am not happy yet,
Transporting hopes arise,
That, building on his book, my soul
Shall mingle with the skies.

THE EUCHARIST, OR FEAST OF SOULS.

1 Ho, drink thou dry and thirsty soul,
By passion parch'd and vice;
Behold the wine, the milk, the bowl,
Drink freely without price.

2 Ho, all that hunger, let them fly!
To feed on heavenly bread,
Which whoso eats, shall never die,
Because on Jesus fed.

3 Come all who love a costly treat,
Who dote on generous wine;
Who long t' associate with the great,
Ye epicures divine;

4 Come every hungry soul, and taste,
In Christ immortal food;
Partake the beatific feast,
Bought with his life and blood.

5 Archangels never had been fed
At charges so immense;
In heaven no table hath been spread,
As this, at such expense.

6 Our life by death is here sustain'd,
And so shall be on high;
For this our feeder was arraign'd,
For this he chose to die.

7 That we on him might feed and live
To ages without end;
He chose his flesh and blood to give—
Ye sinners, what a friend!

8 Where are they now who were supplied
With angel's corn in show'rs?
They ate, and yet we know, they died—
To eat and live, is ours.

9 To live in one transporting round
Of joys which ever last,
Of joys without alloy or bound,
We share in this repast.

10 Great as these are, yet much shall they
In magnitude arise,
When he, who wash'd our sins away,
Shall strike our longing eyes.

11 Methinks I rush to kiss the scar
Which on each foot is found;
But quickly backward start! aware,
My sins had made the wound.

12 Lost in his mercy, and my shame,
I pour a flood of tears;
This damps in me the kindling flame,
That all my spirit cheers,

13 O extacy of joy, too strong;
O horror two intense,
For mortal nature to prolong!
Too big for human sense!

14 How dare I at this table stay,
With judgment, if I do?
And yet how dare I stay away,
With double death in view?

15 My way is hedg'd on either hand,
My way to God and bliss;
That as I cannot stop or stand,
That way I may not miss.

16 Why, then my soul, repent, believe,
And to this table fly;
'Tis thine to tremble, his to give;
Be grateful, and draw nigh.

17 Thy stubborn heart let mercy woo;
Thy mercy, Lord, prevails;
And gratitude that work shall do,
Wherein my conscience fails.

18 How wou'd you love that tender friend,
Who from the tongue, the knife,
Or from the gallows, shou'd defend
Your character and life?

19 And yet, O mortal, how much more,
If he shou'd take your place,
For you shou'd shed his precious gore,
Adopting your disgrace?

20 How wou'd his memory survive
In your responsive soul!
Wou'd he not reign there all alive,
And occupy the whole?

21 But if such gratitude is due
To him who for one hour,
From pain and shame thus rescues you,
And farther hath no power;

22 What then to him do you not owe;
Who died to set you free
From endless pain and shame below,
Due by divine decree?

23 Who died by your own hands, to give
Eternal life to you,
That you in endless joys may live
O! what to him is due!

24 If we believe these glorious things,
And feelings draw from thence,
Action alone the tribute brings,
Which speaks the faith and sense.

25 On faith, firm ground, your anchor cast,
And ne'er hereafter weigh;
But here adhering ever fast,
Put out no more to sea.

AFTER RECEIVING.

26 Hence fly, thou foe to virtue, fly!
Avaunt, ye lust and pride!
Your pow'rs of darkness we defy;
Away! in hell go hide.

27 In Christ Almighty here we stand,
New fed around his board,
And in a now all-conqu'ring hand
We shake his two-edg'd sword;

28 Now giant-like rejoice to run
In light and heat the race
Of this our soul-reviving sun,
Our bleeding God to trace.

29 We, late but worms, now angels grown,
Expand a flaming wing,
And swiftly rising tow'rd the throne,
Loud halaluiahs sing.

30 Halaluiah, halaluiah,
Halal, halaluiah!
Now swiftly rising tow'rd the throne,
Loud halaluiahs sing.

A

HYMN TO GOD.

1 To God, ye choir above, begin
A hymn so loud and strong,
That all the universe may hear,
And join the grateful song.

2 Praise him, thou sun, who dwells unseen
Amidst transcendant light,
Where thy refulgent orb would seem,
A spot, as dark as night.

3 Thou silver moon, ye host of stars,
The universal song,
Thro' the serene and silent night,
To list'ning worlds prolong.

4 Sing him, ye distant worlds and suns,
From whence no travelling ray
Hath yet to us, thro' ages past,
Had time to make its way.

5 Assist, ye raging storms, and bear
On rapid wings his praise,
From north to south, from east to west,
Thro' heaven, and earth, and seas.

6 Exert your voice ye furious fires,
That rend the wat'ry cloud;
And thunder to this nether world,
Your Maker's words aloud.

7 Ye works of God, that dwell unknown
Beneath the rolling main;
Ye birds, that sing among the groves,
And sweep the azure plain;

8 Ye stately hills, that rear your heads,
And, tow'ring, pierce the sky;
Ye clouds, that with an awful pace,
Majestic roll on high;

9 Ye insects small, to which, one leaf
Within its narrow sides,
A vast extended world displays,
And spacious realms provides;

10 Ye race, still less than these, with which
The stagnant water teems,
To which one drop, however small,
A boundless ocean seems.

11 Whate'er you are, where'er you dwell,
Ye creatures great or small,
Adore the wisdom, praise the power;
That made and keeps you all.

12 And if you want or sense or sounds
To swell the grateful noise,
Prompt mankind with that sense, and they
Shall find for you a voice.

13 From all the realms of boundless space,
Let loud Hosannah's sound;
Loud send, ye wondrous works of God,
The joyful concert round.

14 But while his other works, aloud,
His power and wisdom sing,
For these, and for his mercies, man,
Do thou thine incense bring.

15 To save thee from the dreadful doom,
Which for thy sins was due,
He left the blissful realms of light,
And to thy rescue flew.

16 To crown thee with immortal life,
By thy own hands he dies;
And in the agony of death,
For thy salvation cries.

17 For this, o'erwhelm'd with shame and grief,
Thy shocking sins bewail;
And sing the wonders of his love,
Wrapt in a flame of zeal.

18 And, O my soul, with all around,
What thanks shalt thou return?
How should a vile unworthy heart,
So sav'd, so favour'd, burn!

19 How great, how matchless must these gifts,
Almighty goodness, be,
That flow from such majestic hands,
To such a wretch as me!

20 Yet, since to thee, a grateful song
My soul attempts to raise,
Take, good and gracious Father, take
The tribute of my praise.

21 How far, O Lord, beneath thy throne,
How far beneath thine eye,
These stars around thy footstool shine,
And deck this nether sky!

22 Tho' farther downward still I creep,
A worm on earth below,
Yet thro' the clouds, the skies, the stars,
My song of love shall go.

23 On wings of gratitude and love,
My praises shall ascend;
While boundless Mercy to my voice
Thy gracious ear shall bend.

24 'Twas thou that call'd me forth from nought,
'Twas thou didst bid me be;
That gave a world for my support;
All glory be to thee.

25 'Twas thou that suffer'd in my stead;
'Twas thou that made me free,
When sin and death enslav'd my soul;
All glory be to thee.

26 When sorrows or temptations come,
Thou timely bid'st me flee,
Or giv'st me strength to stand my ground;
All glory be to thee.

27 All these thy general bounties, Lord,
Are free as light or air;
Of these, with all thy sons in Christ,
I've had a plenteous share.

28 A long detail of debts, untold,
To swell the list appear;
Of debts peculiar to myself,
Too great for thanks to clear.

29 Of debts too many, and too great,
For catalogues to sum,
Receiv'd already, now enjoy'd
Or hop'd in time to come.

30 Thro' dangers countless as the sands
That spread the ocean's shore,
Conducted by thy hand I pass'd,
And hope to pass thro' more.

31 When in the midst of woes and fears
I pour'd my mournful prayer,
Thy providential pity lent
A kind indulgent ear.

32 When prosp'rous fortune smooth'd her face,
And spread her dang'rous wiles,
And tempted my unguarded heart,
With her seducing smiles;

33 'Twas then thy wisdom interfer'd,
And loudly cry'd, 'beware!
Behold the sting of sin, and death,
That lurks beneath her snare.'

34 Of all the Christian vineyard, I
Enjoy that very place,
On which superior brightness breaks,
Unclouded from thy face.

35 Here double portions of thy light,
With purer lustre flow;
Beam on the soul, awake its powers,
And bid its virtues grow.

36 I neither stand aloft, expos'd
On Fortune's giddy wheel,
Nor does my tortur'd spirit groan
Beneath th' oppressor's heel.

37 I neither dread the dang'rous storms
That thunder o'er the great,
Nor feel the pressures that are felt,
In a too abject state.

38 For I my own wants I have enough,
And something for the poor,
I've peace of mind, and in this world,
My God, I ask no more.

39 If counter to these comforts past
My future lot should run,
Beneath thy chast'ning rod I'll bend,
And say, 'Thy will be done.'

40 If grief shou'd force a rueful groan,
That very groan I'll raise
In hallelujah's to thy name,
And make it mount in praise.

41 And when the gloomy hour of death
With fear and woe draws nigh,
I'll hail thee with my latest breath;
I'll sing thy praise, and die.

42 Die to this world, with all its fear,
Its woe, distraction, strife;
But live anew to thee, my God,
In Christ, my better life.

SENILIA;

OR,

AN OLD MAN'S MISCELLANY.

Farrago Libelli.—Juv.

Cum flueret lutulentus, erat quod tollere velles.
—Ubi quid datur otî,
Illudo chartis. Hor.

DEDICATION.

TO THE READERS

OF

NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, REVIEWS, AND NOVELS.

My dear Athenians,

As you 'busy yourselves about nothing else, but to tell or hear some new thing;' as you are now almost the only readers among us; as your palates are too delicate for long concatenations of reasoning; as your digestion is not strong enough for more than two folio leaves of reading at a time; and as even of these you generally snap up but a morsel here and there; I here address to you a book, of no great size, consisting of things, more new to you than those of a weekly paper, or a novel, too concise to tire, too various, and, I hope, too spirited, not to entertain you a little. Every particular may be read by itself, as in your newspaper or magazine, without tempting you to the perusal of that which precedes or follows, for here all connexion of paragraphs, one with another, is industriously avoided. Open the book where you will, you shall find a scrap, not too long for a detention of more than from two to five or six minutes, excepting at numbers ten and twenty-two, not intended for your inspection, unless you are somewhat of a philosophical turn, or occasionally feel an appetite for a little hard and dry meat. Here nothing is racked a single line beyond its own natural length, so that your greatest compliment to the writer will be, to wish that on any one subject he had dwelt but half a minute longer. Having formerly published some little things, which he called his 'Juvenilia,' he calls these his 'Senilia,' written for your use, in his seventy-ninth year, hoping that either title might apologize for their numerous defects. His

modesty and diffidence, as to the success of things so unconnected, and written in extreme old age, induced him, when he gave the copy to the worthy publisher, to engage himself for the expense of the paper, lest the man of business might sustain some loss by the sale; but this man, of an uncommon spirit, declares he will accept of nothing from the author, because, as he proceeds with the work at the press, he is persuaded that it will be attended with the sale he wishes for. He is not much afraid of your finding any thing tedious or insipid; he only fears you may sometimes think him a little too alert. If you now and then see a soaring fly, or an insect rampant, take it for granted, they intend to amuse, not to offend you. If he sometimes lards his olio with a spice of the curious, or facetious, you will not think it amiss in the midst of documents, perhaps too serious for your former taste. In one of his lucubrations you will find the use of humour, on a proper occasion, justified by the holy Scriptures themselves. Pardon the writer, if in him you never meet with an account of a young lady of seventy, or seventeen, just going to elope with her own, or her father's footman. Of all things he hates scandal, and lies, and writes at too great a distance from the world, to know what is doing any where, but in the church, and in his own chamber. It is true, he hath handled some classes of men, and one or two characters, with a little roughness; but it is only because they have laboured, under the disguise of a sacred function, to deceive you. The writer fears to go any farther with you on the bewitching subject of scandal; but hopes, however, you will not disrelish his work the more, for being previously assured, that there is not a lie in the whole. He knows you are fond of lies, but not just because they are lies, but because they divert you; and knowing them to be such, you are not deceived by them. If truths may be as entertaining to you, permit him to believe you will like them almost as well. If, in your newspaper, you should find an advertisement, that a large estate was fallen to you in some neighbouring country, and that you had nothing to do but to take possession, on proving yourself to be the very person named in said advertisement; I can easily conceive your joy on the occasion,

your consultations with your friends about the truth of the advertisement, and the hurry you would be in to set out, on the well-attested proof of your title, for the country named in the advertisement, with every requisite testimonium of your being the person entitled. If now, in my newspapers, you should find an indubitable advertisement of a much larger estate bequeathed to you in a finer country, and on a tenure, truly for ever, I do not ask you, what you would do in regard to your claim, because I perfectly know what you ought to do.

Pardon him too for dwelling chiefly on religious subjects. Every man is in danger of speaking or writing like a fool, if not on the subject he knows best. You yourself would have a scurvy opinion of him, should you not perceive, that he hath religion more at heart than every thing else. It must, however, be owing to a gross ignorance of our religion, not to think it the sweetest of all subjects, and, by far, the most capable of affording delight, when properly exhibited to the human heart. In this particular he is drawn out of himself by his love of God and you. He knows how pernicious to you material errors, unfeeling coldness, or ill-directed warmths, in religion, may prove. If in any part of this work he may hope to kindle a little warmth in hearts too cold, or in another, point the way to one already warm, he may be of more use to you than you are yet aware of, under the influence of either disposition. To know the principles of true religion, and to feel its spirit, should be, yet are not, the same thing in some minds. The candle of this writer may serve to shew the former, and to kindle up the latter. As you will read but little at once on any subject, possibly least on that of religion, a glance from a writer of this sort is better fitted for your purpose than the long and elaborate treatise of another. Let the curiosity which leads you to a common newspaper lead you to this, and fear not the consequence. Do not be alarmed at the thoughts of becoming a better man than you are; a worse, this will not make you. Be sure of this, that goodness and happiness are inseparably connected, as are undoubtedly their contraries. If, like the old Athenians, you are actuated by a passion for news, here are many things perfectly new and strange

to you, perhaps, to some of you, an unknown God. Here are news, not from France, Spain, or either India, but from another world. If, as Christian soldiers, you are unprovided of arms and ammunition, here is a magazine of both, and every weapon more like the sling of David than the heavy armour of Saul. If you would look back, and make a careful research, here are materials for a most useful review, not of other men's works, but of your own. Men are generally made good or bad by little and little. In this work you have 'here a little, and there a little,' to make you a good man, that your freedom may not be forced, nor your weakness oppressed by too much at once. Your newspaper or journal is only the amusement of the day; but a day is of infinite consequence to you. A heathen poet says, *carpe diem*, crop the day, which, like the flower of a tuberose hyacinth, must perish at night. One of greater authority saith, 'to-day if you will hear the voice of God, harden not your hearts.' Pursuant to the same authority, the journal, here afforded to you, will exhort you daily to consider what you are about, where you are going, and how you are prepared to die, 'while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' Without a good deal more attention than the readers of newspapers are usually blessed with, it is impossible to know the value of a day, nor what that or the next day may bring forth. Were you ever told, that your time and your life are precisely the same thing? or that your time, short as it is, will give that colour to your eternity which can never be changed? Surely any thing that would tell you these, and put you on redeeming your time, as the days of your life are evil, and at present enslaved to pernicious follies, ought to be acceptable, though it should cost you all you have in this world. There is nothing you are so much terrified at as the thought of your own death; it therefore seems very strange, that you should delight in battles, and the deaths of ten or twenty thousand in one day, as if you were to feast with the wolf and the vulture on the flesh of the slain. How can your heart be amused with carnage and slaughter? Or, have you time for mere amusements, though they were more suited to the sentiments of human nature, not to

say, of Christianity? Think a little. Have you time to read of duels, murders, adulteries, &c. and to tell in every company these delightful pieces of intelligence? You, who are hastening to eternity? You, whose state of probation must so soon be brought to its important conclusion? The youngest among you ought keenly to consider this. This, notwithstanding, we frequently see people of both sexes reading newspapers with spectacles. Perhaps human folly never affords a sight more absurd. As the decay of sight is a warning that life is drawing towards a close, and eternity near at hand, the wise Christian should put on spectacles, that he may find those in the word of God, made by Solomon, that admirable optician, whereby it may be seen, that 'all things under the sun are vanity and vexation of spirit.' The wise Christian, seeing this, will turn his back on this world, and with the telescope of faith at his eye, will follow the star of Bethlehem till it guides him to that superior light which will throw his shadow towards the glimmering sun, and guide him up to the Father of Spirits. He will put on these spectacles, that he may see how 'to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,' and that he may prepare for the grand and final emigration. For the same happy purpose the old lady will put on these spectacles, not that she may search in a newspaper for the most fashionable friseur.

After iterated supplications for your pardon, this writer peremptorily insists on your thanks, if you are still a newsmonger of the old stamp, for the many obscurities, inaccuracies, and blunders which you may find in his miscellany, thrown overboard, on set purpose, as so many empty barrels, for the philosophical whale of infidelity to play with, and for your amusement, as the captives of curiosity, to exercise your critical talent. Lest in this wood, which he shews you, it may be easy for you to miss your way, he directs you to No. 8, 10, 23, 29, 113, 114, 123, 147, 159, 168, 172, 188. These, with at least as many more, you are to thank the writer for. As to such as touch on religious subjects, he draws them from the 'fountain of living waters,' opened 'for sin and uncleanness;' and is convinced they will be found

harder for the infidel critic to deal with, than even the polished steel of Reid himself. On these he defies even the old dragon to fix his envenomed teeth. Now he knows if you look into his book at all, you will turn directly to the weak places he hath pointed out, as coming from himself alone; but then he is persuaded your curiosity will force you to glance on some of the rest, if it were but just to see what so odd a writer can say on subjects more serious.

If the public papers you are fond of, are fraught with infidelity, immorality, and faction, you are to blame yourselves for it, because the publishers have nothing else in view, but to accommodate themselves to your taste and humour. It is no easy matter for them to supply you with a daily sheet of such things as will please you, though nothing is to be had in greater plenty. They live by you; and if you love trash, they must sell it to you, or starve. Your love of loose principles, of vice, of faction, of scandal, are to be fed; good books must be condemned, bad ones must be applauded, a menstrual tête-a-tête, or whore and rogue, must be furnished, because you delight in the growth of wickedness, or in the ruin of characters. Were you but half as fond of virtue and piety, they would stuff their publications with instances of chastity, of conjugal fidelity, of justice and charity; nay, with prayers, hymns, meditations, and ejaculations; for such may be had, or might be contrived. But you and they are, at present, unhappily fitted for one another; insomuch that their readers may be damned at the cheap rate of a penny, or three-halfpence. There are prodigious numbers of patriots that cannot afford so high a purchase for the knowledge of politics, and are supplied with newspapers at a halfpenny a week by the hawkers, the same paper being read every day by twenty or thirty politicians. Of these, there are not a few, that give up so much of their time and attention to the interests of Europe, as wholly to neglect their own, and run themselves deeply in debt. For the benefit of these Decii, confined above stairs, the hawkers carry long slender wands, with a little slit in one end, by which they put up a paper, some times as high as a garret window, and

take it down again, half an hour after, for the sage perusal of others.

These things are by no means said to condemn the use of newspapers, but merely the abuse. The writer is perfectly sensible, that especially in a trading country, such papers are, in some sort, necessary. He considers the public posts as the very legs of trade, and the newspapers, as its wings; but laments the propagation of bad principles, false politics, the infamy of the innocent, &c. in the same channel. He laments too the loss of time to our manufactures, which trade and industry ought to engross.

The writer of this book, now addressed to you, would convert your taste to somewhat more worthy of rational readers, more noble, more lastingly delightful, more productive of real pleasure, and of that true happiness, you would eagerly pursue, would you but give him leave to instil into your minds its lovely idea. Then, instead of encouragers of infidelity and vice, you would become the blessed patrons and patronesses of every thing that is good and laudable. He would lead you to the Bible. Oh! yes, start not; he would lead you from novels, and the most despicable garbage of reading, to the book of God, wherein you would be taught to look upward at the dignity of your souls, at the love of God for you, at the eternal happiness and glory he invites you to; and, in consequence, would soon see the contempt that is justly due to the fugitive trifles, which hitherto have engaged your mistaken affections. You would there see death hastening to shut up these from you for ever, and to leave you nothing, but good, or guilty consciences, to subsist you in endless joy or misery. In all cases it would be foolish, but in this, fatal, to be looking abroad, when all things are going wrong with you at home. Would you not think it extremely silly to concern yourself about a change in the French ministry, when you know not how to get your dinner? And how much more so to dissipate your time and attention on the trifling affairs of others, when your soul and eternity are at stake, and probably but ill provided for? Should you be so desperately lost, as to be afraid of this,

throw the book from you, and take again your newspaper, your magazine, your review, your novel.

I here take my leave of the press and you, with a request, that, if any thing should be printed in my name after my decease, you will pronounce it spurious, for I will not leave a single line for a posthumous publication. I shall as soon think of walking after my death, as talking.

That God may give you right understanding in all things, is the devout prayer of

YOUR FAITHFUL WATCHMAN.

SENILIA.

1. VERY nice distinctions are more apt to be absurd, than such as are founded on obvious and common observation; witness the complaint of a servant girl, beaten by her mistress; Hard indeed! that I, whose father's brooms sold for two a penny, should be drubbed by you; whereas your father was forced to part with three of his for the same money. I am therefore come of a better family than you are. This piece of heraldry, more exquisite than any made in England, or even France, will be laughed at by people in high life.

And yet these very people universally run into a distinction by far more nice and absurd. They all, at every stage of life, wish to prolong it, and yet not one of them is content to grow old, although all mankind know, that they must either grow old, or die young. I am now so far advanced in years as to find out their reason for wishing, not to grow old. The many infirmities of body and mind, which lie in wait for us, as soon as we turn the corner of seventy; and the distaste or contempt, not always undeserved, wherewith the younger part of mankind, often our own children, or such as we have served and provided for, are disposed to treat us, bear hard upon the testiness of our own tempers, and now and then excite a wish in us, that we had died before this melancholy period of life. It would be, one should think, enough to perceive our persons and advice, which, it is true, we are now too ready to obtrude, received with ridicule; to hear, for instance, our persons vilified under the very witty appellation of, squaretoes, in comedies and novels; and our admonitions, sage as we think them, slighted because our distempered toes can no longer bear the sharp angle of a fashionable shoe. Whoever the genius was, from whose invention this admirable piece of wit was first struck out, it hath been so often echoed by subsequent wits, that a man with broad or squaretoes to his shoes, must be ridiculous, and his advice contemptible.

This is not enough, we old ones must not only be shunned

and shuffled out of the way; and if we but seem to claim a small share of the respect, due to age, and quote Scripture in favour of the hoary head, we shall bring ourselves and the word of God into equal contempt; nay, we shall be choused and fleeced, even by those who subsist on our bounty, while they affect to consider us as dotards, hardly capable of knowing when we are ill-used, and only destined to be the passive prey of ingratitude and cunning. Patience, and lying quietly under this usage, invites a repetition; and flouncing only aggravates it.

Humanly speaking, there is for these evils no remedy, excepting in the possession of wealth. The ties of nature or gratitude are here not to be depended on; and even that of expecting selfishness in those, the aged have to do with, is easily broken. The best apology however an old man can make to himself for having been a miser, is to be drawn from the pride and selfishness of younger people, who, that they may carry off somewhat for the gratification of their youthful passions, may be willing to tolerate those of age in him. But so little of this toleration is he to build on, that I think, the old people, who were killed and eaten by their children, were happier than we, who may still live merely for the emolument and sport of ours. When I said just now, that wealth is the only resource of an old man against the evils here complained of, I added (humanly speaking) for there is another and higher, if he may have recourse to it, and that is, God. He ought however to ask himself, whether or no it will not be presumption in him to look upward for relief. Hath he suffered yet sufficiently for the sins of his past life? No. Does he now wish for death? No. Is he already dead to the appetites and vanities of this world? No. Is he mild, gentle, and unsuspicious of those about him? Is he prepared to enter into eternity, and resigned to the will of God? No, no, no. How then dare he fret, complain, or pray for deliverance? Does he not find, that if left to his own wishes, and to such comforts as life might even yet afford him, he would not be a whit better man, two or three years hence, nor fitter to die, than he is just now? Does he not consider, that, by all his temporary and moderate sufferings, his gracious God is weaning him from a life he hath been too long habituated to, and scourging him into an asylum, into which he would never permit himself to beled by the long-suffering patience and goodness of that God? As he hath long, in too great a degree, forgotten God, would he have God to forget him

at the last? What? no weaning aloes for a child so old! No rod for such a back! Is heaven so low in his esteem, as to be had for nothing? Or how can he hope to enter there with nothing but a hell within him?

These observations have been dictated by the state I am at present in, and set down here as applicable to other men in circumstances, the same with, or similar to, mine. How far they may be useful to some few among them, they, not I, must judge.

But why I am still scribbling, as it were, to others, though perhaps to as little purpose as heretofore? may be reasonably asked: it will be sufficient to answer this to myself, till I shall be favoured with a reader. It is a long time since I learned, that one is rendered more agreeable to his acquaintances by listening, than by talking, let him talk ever so well. But then I cannot listen, for I am deaf, and so like many old men, and like women, in every stage of life, I talk incessantly, and thereby drive from me every mortal, who wishes to hear himself talk. 'Tis no excuse to say, I know many things, which some of these do not know, nor that I really mean to do some little good, particularly by holding forth on the subject of religion, the sole purpose, for which I yet live, and am supported by Providence, to an atheistical world. Thus almost sequestered, as I am, from mankind by my own deafness, and their aversion, I must either speak through my pen, or pass the short remainder of my days in the condition of an oyster.

Thus therefore I proceed, without knowing whether I shall live to set my pen on the next page, to throw on paper, unconnected, such reflections as the word of God, as age and experience, and as observations on the ways of men, shall suggest. No otherwise can I be amused; no otherwise can I be of any use. The little knowledge I have is almost wholly of the religious kind. To this my heart hath been long wedded, and whatsoever else I know, is known only in subserviency to religion. All other sorts of knowledge are, in my opinion, of very little consequence, but as handmaids, in some degree, to this, which hath God, heaven, and eternity, for its immediate objects. The men of this world however may judge of this, as they will; yet one thing cannot be disputed, that every man, if he speaks or writes, should speak or write of such matters as he understands best; the barrister of law; the physician of distempers and medicines; the merchant of commerce; and the divine of religion; but the barrister, phy-

sician, and merchant, must at last give his head, and as much of his heart, as he can call in, to religion. Happy he, who in the bustle of this world, and in his struggle for wealth, hath, all along, given religion a mastery over his understanding and heart! It will be too late to close the scene with that which he had always kept at a distance, from his first entrance on the stage of study and action.

But if in this, ye men of the world, I seem to talk nonsense, excuse it, for I am very old. I address you here by a sort of prosopopœia, for I know, you will neither see nor hear on this subject, no more than the walls of the room I write in; Why, you will say, should we attend to this babbler, old, testy, talkative, conceited, swelling with advice and reproof? Ye say well, for just such I am. But then, just such you may be in sight of your sons, your clients, your patients, your correspondents; and then what will become of your fees, and your trade?

That few men live to a great age, and still retain their faculties, is not the effect of chance, but of Providence, whose intention it is, to inculcate into the rising generations some sense of religion and prudence. For this they are qualified by a long experience, and authorized by that respect which is naturally due to the whiteness of their hairs, and the affection they may be still warmed with towards their descendants. If however there is some vanity intermixed, even this is too useful, and too natural, not to have been the designation of Providence, inasmuch as it helps to render them so much more communicative, than otherwise they might be, under the circumstance of indifference to them and their advice, in younger people. They are certainly not intended by their Maker to be thrown aside as useless lumber; and to what other purpose can men be reserved, now no longer able to work or fight? The study of history hath been universally deemed a most useful application of our time and abilities, inasmuch as, by the success or failures of other men, the people of the present age may be best taught to regulate their conduct. But of all historians, old men, still subsisting, may be the most useful, especially, if through the natural abatement of their attachments to opinions and parties, whereof they are just going to take an eternal leave, they devote themselves wholly to truth and utility; and make it evident, that religion is uppermost in all they say. It is by no means of so much moment to the present generation, to know how Themistocles or Cæsar acted in the elevated cha-

racters they had to fill, as to know, how men of like station with ourselves, in times immediately before our own, have acted; or how such as still lag behind on the stage of life, are now acting; and what is, or hath been, the consequences of their actions. Here example comes home to us, and we are deeply concerned in every lesson, fairly and pertinently deduced from it. If no instance of prosperity or miscarriage can in this case be indifferent to us, let us hear the old man's story, setting down to the account of his loquacity whatsoever is inapplicable to ourselves, but carefully carrying to that of our own conduct, every thing that may tend to our prudence and circumspection. It is the duty of the old, to advise. For this purpose alone they exist, if they are already prepared for the great change.

But the younger people say, They now preach and reprove for no other reason, than because they are become incapable of those enjoyments they once indulged as freely as younger people now do. It is true, those enjoyments are become tasteless to them; and it is not through envy they now censure an excess in them, but through a just sense of the ruinous vanity and vexation they found in them. They look back with extreme regret on their past follies and vices, and forward with horror on their unhappy consequences. Are then the warnings they give to be wholly ascribed to envy and vanity, and not, at least in some degree, to a tenderness for those they admonish?

We perpetually hear a number of old people crying up the wisdom and goodness of former times, and asserting, that mankind have, from the beginning, been ever degenerating from bad to worse. We hear others, on the contrary, as positively asserting, that men are now just as good as ever they were. Both these opinions are equally crude and ill-founded. There is no such thing as the degeneracy complained of in the former, and only complained of to apologize for the wickedness as if natural and unavoidable in the complainers. And as to the assertors of the latter, it is flagrantly felt in regard to such countries as were an age ago, poor, and therefore virtuous; but are now, through accession of wealth, and an influx of luxuries, become loose, debauched, and wicked; wicked on irreligious principles, eagerly traded for, and greedily embraced, as the prime articles of luxury, by a people who can now afford to be as proud and dissolute as their corrupted hearts can wish.

In this present state of my country, I, especially as a clergy-

man, am not permitted to stand on the bank an unconcerned spectator of a flood, so ruinous to that country, and its desperate individuals. No, I must either strive to stem the torrent, or be carried down with it. All I have written, or am now writing, is against the stream. The contempt of the haughty, and the ridicule of blockheads, fall on me as a daring dotard. Be it so. From these accrues almost all my temptation to vanity. Sensible as I am, that God and truth are with me, and that both will soon interpose to turn the stream, or to dry it up by an effusion of fiery judgments, what have I to fear? Nothing, certainly from what I am now doing, but a great deal from those sins, wherewith (woe is me) I have augmented the guilt of my country.

It were easy to make out a very considerable catalogue of old men, in or near my own time, who have adorned the literary world with performances, not only of universal utility, but with such a spirit of brilliancy, as justified the compliment of a gentlewoman to an old author, in saying, he had kept the best wine to the last. Waterland, Young the poet, and Synge, a late archbishop of Tuam, might deservedly be placed at the head of this catalogue. Nevertheless, as I am myself a clergyman, it will be more decent to place two old laymen, no writers, with them, if not before them. Let the first be old David Latouche, who, having passed the 80th year of his life, was translated, for he could not die, from this world, into that where Enoch and Elias found their own places. Him I accompanied with the following hasty acknowledgment of his worth, as well in regard to me, as my country.

2. The departure from this world of the elder David Latouche, now notified to the public, deeply concerned therein, as his welcome arrival hath been announced to a better, I, without ever having seen him, but in his singular goodness, where I also felt him, am compelled by personal as well as national gratitude to wait on his hearse. Two or three years ago, when I was labouring to provide for the relief of my poor parishioners, in a time of famine, he sent one of his worthy sons to desire I might draw on his house in Castle-street for such sums as I should think requisite on the melancholy occasion. Instances of this nature have been so often, and so liberally multiplied, through a long life, by him, and his sons, whom his precepts have taught to follow his lovely example, without the narrow-hearted distinction between different ways of worship, or between friends and foes, that all Ireland can, and all the good people of Ireland will, be vouchers for a thou-

sand times more than I can enumerate here. His sons have not, just now on his going upward, caught his falling mantle, but have long ago received it from his hands, to be spread over the naked poor, with sums of money to feed them, equal to the united contributions of many charitable lords. Scandal itself, in balance of so much good, cannot assign a single instance of injury done by him or them to any mortal. I challenge the reader of this to search the herald's office for any thing equally noble.

To make a large fortune with the conscience of a true Christian, and to dispense abroad in such a manner, rarely happens in miniature to the same person, perhaps never on so large a scale. If this is not nobility here, it certainly is there, where infinite wisdom and justice are the heralds. Farewell, glorious David! after a long life passed in devotion and charity, of which it is hard to say, whether the one or other was warmest.

I will add here, that he, who by honesty and industry acquires a large fortune, lives frugally, and disburses largely to God's image in distress, is a true hero, and when his body goes to the grave, his soul rises to a seat, from whence it sees the kings and conquerors of this world at a vast distance below it. The martyr only sits higher.

3. The other person, whom I shall mention here, as doing honour to a white head, is Richmond, an old dancing master, a man who, to my knowledge, hath, for above forty years, carried himself as a gentleman, a pious Christian, and ever without exception as one fully equal to that profession, on which he depended for his subsistence, and wherein he never taught a young lady to fling up her limbs in a dance as the present modish French master do. It was not, until after the seventy-fifth year of his age, that he had an occasion to shew himself a perfect hero in philanthropy and courage. One night, having read prayers with his family, as he was going to his bed, he heard a loud cry of murder in a female voice, repeated from a house, not far from his own, in Prince's-street, Dublin. This hurried him down to his parlour with a case of pistols in his hands, and followed by his daughter. The cry still continuing, he opened a window, but it was too dark without, to see any thing. Having a providential apprehension for his daughter, though none for himself, he had but just time to push her from the window behind the adjoining pier, when one of the robbers, of whom there were six, fired upon him, and it was by the light of the villain's discharge, that Rich-

mond shot him dead. He and a brave servant boy of his, then sallied into the street, where, perceiving by the woman's cries, that the rest of the gang had got into the house of a neighbour, confined to his bed by sickness, and were by repeated wounds murdering his neighbour's servant maid, it was not long before he, his boy, and some of the watch, then coming to his assistance, cleared the house, fought the gang in the street, knocked one of them down with a clubbed pistol, pursued the rest, and took two of them, whom he lodged in Newgate, before he returned to his terrified family; but prosecuted the prisoners to the gallows. It was but too plain, this was the first time the brave man had been concerned in blood. It was with difficulty that the minister of his parish could prevent his sinking under the grief of having sent a fellow-creature into eternity with a load of guilt on his head.—Some time after, this undaunted man going homeward at night, found a servant boy crying in the street, who had been a moment before robbed of a tankard, which his master had sent him out with for some drink, by three footpads. These Richmond instantly pursued into a close back-yard, being joined by a stranger, of a spirit like his own. They were fired upon by the villains, but took two of them; afterward convicted, and executed them.—It hath been said that my hero acquitted himself with similar honour in a third adventure with robbers, the particulars of which I am not acquainted with. In the first of these encounters he fought for a man, whom he had rather reason to disregard. In all of them without the least view to his own advantage; in all of them indeed for an ungrateful public. One or two of us have endeavoured, but in vain, to bring his disinterested merits into public consideration. Hence it hath occurred to me, that, since he is not, the robbers ought to be rewarded and encouraged. So totally opposite is his behaviour and theirs, that, if there is no merit on his side, there must be some on their part; nay, in good earnest, I begin to think them of high utility to the police of a city like this, as by patrolling the streets at late hours, they help, more than any thing else, to keep idle and wicked people at home, and preserve them, not only from cold air, but from worse sins than robbery, to wit, gaming and wenching.—Sure I am that Waterland, Young, Synge, and Latouche, were they still here, would not think, I had done them any dishonour by bringing this heroic dancing-master into their company. Exalted as the place is, which they occupy at present, it seems most reasonable

to believe, that the station of Richmond will not hereafter be inferior.

4. Having already expressed my intention, or rather the necessity I shall be hereafter under, of paying little regard to the coherence of one reflection with another, I must here say a word or two on the subject of connexion, which is necessary in some things, as between the horse and the car, between the premises and the conclusion. Yet we buy a horse in one place, and a car in another, separately. In like manner, we pick up here and there, hints, materials, axioms, premises, nay, even conclusions, which we afterward arrange into regular discourses. Unconnected matters therefore are sometimes useful, especially to such as have a better talent at disposing, than at inventing. Accordingly, I never gave any thing to the public, so well liked, or so often read, as the Hylema in my fifth volume. It was Dryden, I think, who observed that no two modern books were better received by the world, than Paschal's Thoughts, wholly, and Bruyere's Characters, almost wholly unconnected. If going to Moscow, we want a house, it is very convenient to find all the parts and materials of a timber-house, ready framed, and capable of being erected in a few hours; but if furniture is not so easily obtained in that city, we must wait till it is brought from various and distant places, or is manufactured by Russian workmen on the spot. Now, if I am but a Russian workman, I at least supply you at a low price.

5. If there is nothing in a man but machinery, it may be hoped, that an harpsichord shall some time or other be made, which shall, of itself, perform any tune we bid it, and accompany the same with an excellent song. Such was once exhibited as a show at Paris, and people began to say, the devil was in it, because perhaps the tunes and songs were of the wanton kind. But an antimaterialist having caused the instrument to be opened, found a dwarf boy in the belly of it. The body of a fine young lady, who sings well, is no more than a musical machine; but there is somewhat within her, that plays upon it, which is deprived of that pleasing power, as often as the machine is disordered by a violent cold, just in the same manner as Handel must have been when his organ or harpsichord was wholly untuned. He is little better than a beast who thinks, there is no soul in a beast; and he is worse than a beast who thinks, there is not somewhat more than an animal soul in a man. It is nothing but a wish, that dictates

this opinion, and that wish again is but the dictate of such a worse than beastly life, as shocks his still inextinguished conscience at the prospect of an account. Were it possible he could form high hopes of heaven at the end of such a life, he would, that instant, find a soul within him, and become immortal in his own opinion. People may talk as they will; but there is no one thing more evident to experience, than that most men owe their opinions to their wishes. Happy he, who wishes for nothing, but that which he is sure to obtain; yet happier he, who wishes only for that which is really good for him.

6. Briareus, with a hundred hands, may keep open house for a hundred mouths, but Plutus cannot afford it.

7. The bank of supererogation, by too largely dealing in discount, is losing its credit, and must soon shut up.

8. Music, as most other arts and sciences, born like a child soon arose to its perfection, and hath been, ever since, degenerating. That its chief excellence consisted in simplicity, is evident from what we know of ancient music, and from its effects above two thousand centuries ago, when it spoke to the heart through the ears. The ancients knew nothing of counter part, nor did the absurdity of listening to two tunes at once ever enter into their thoughts. Even we know the attention is distracted and enfeebled when given to any two things at the same time. The same, in a certain degree, may be said of multiplying notes in the same tune, which we moderns dignify with the name of variety; for here too the attention is hurried too fast from one thing to another, before an effect of any force can be impressed on the mind. It is not to tickle the ears, but to move the soul, that poetry and music should be employed. Plutarch, now an ancient, complains, that music even in his time, was debauched by adding more strings to their instruments, and by running divisions without meaning, through a multiplicity of tones. What would he say, were he to hear our present senseless jingle, introduced by our composers, who really know nothing of music, to shew what tricks they can play with sounds, and to give our conceited performers an opportunity of displaying an agility of finger. Compared to the ancients, Corelli himself, through generally touching the passions, was but a modern. Handel was somewhat more. By his choice of subjects, and composing to the purpose, his music spoke an intelligible language, felt by the hearts of his hearers. At present, the compositions of these great masters are

out of fashion. Seldom in public, and never in private, do we hear a single bar of their compositions, nor any thing that hath the resemblance of them. No, all is tweedledum, tweedledee, jingle, jangle.

9. Much the same is the case of religion, which, like man, to whom it was sent, came forth at once in simplicity and perfection, and hath ever since been subtilized and corrupted by priestcraft, and inventions of men; still more prone through vanity and their other vices to accommodate religion to themselves, than themselves to religion, excepting when God was pleased to interpose, and revive among mankind a due sense of its original simplicity and spirit. And now what have we for it? Nothing but a subject of pretended dispute, for which we care not a straw, any farther than to make a shew of our own ingenuity in striking out new whims, and defending them with a fancied superiority of refinement. Just because we have espoused it, we quarrel about it with any one who sets up for a familiarity with it, though perhaps he cares as little for our old wife, as we do ourselves. As the cross of Christ was a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks, so his humility, and all his other virtues, are so many stumbling blocks to our detestable passions, and downright foolishness to our philoshphical imaginations. Its mysteries serve us for so many bones of contention, about which we snarl and dispute, just because we do not understand them, but only as so many objections to the religion, of which they appear to make a part, although we know, or ought to know, that our faith is by no means concerned with any doctrine of religion, but so far forth only as we are able easily to understand it. As to the foreknowledge of God, one of the mysteries of natural religion, as it is called, and as to the peculiarly Christian mysteries of the Trinity, the incarnation, and the resurrection, we perfectly understand the propositions wherein they are delivered, and have more than sufficient reason to believe them on God's word, though we can no more account for them, than for the rolling of our eyes, but should believe them as there is not so much as a shadow of inutility, inconsistency, or contradiction in any of them. It is a great doubt with me, whether, on all other subjects half so much nonsense hath been spoken and written, as on that of religion; but sure I am, that in this instance, it is more impious than any other. Perhaps the grossest proofs of this are those, so often repeated from one infidel to another, wherein they confidently

assert it as their primary and fundamental axiom, that the uninstructed, unassisted light of natural reason is a sufficient guide to man in all matters of religion and morality, to all men, the low and illiterate, as well as the learned. O ye philosophical infidels, how much do you make yourselves accountable for? Is man as God made him? Is he able, of himself, and by the light of nature alone, to find out the true religion, that is, on all occasions, instantly and on the spot to know what he ought to think, speak and do, to promote the glory of his Maker, and insure his own real happiness? For himself, and all other men, ideots and madmen excepted, he boldly answers, Yes; and by this answer obliges himself to justify all the opinions of his predecessors in philosophy, howsoever contrary to one another, howsoever destructive of morality and common honesty, they have been, particularly those of the Sceptics, to whom truth and certainty in every thing were but dreams; and those of the Epicureans, who threw a dye for the creation, and gave the universe to blind chance; to justify all the religions of Jews, Mahometans, Pagans, and why not of Christians too? To justify the adoration of sticks, stones, devils; to justify the rites of Venus in Cyprus, of Adonis on Mount Aphac, of Flora at Rome, whose priestesses were naked strumpets; in all which the most enormous lewdness was practised as solemn acts of devotion; to justify human sacrifices, particularly of children, burnt alive by their own parents, an horrible species of worship, which obtained every where, among the Assyrians, Persians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, &c. All these things, we know, were done, not only by here and there a single fool, but by whole nations, the most civilized and polished, who could boast the light of nature in an higher degree of perfection, than our present Deists, as is evident by their works, still extant in history, poetry, architecture, sculpture, &c. The advocates of the uninstructed light of nature must also patronise their brethren the canibals, those undebauched children of nature, in their goodly practice of fattening, killing, and eating the flesh of other men. This horrible piece of barbarity is as natural, as their sacrificing their children to their gods. Here I cannot help thinking of Laban, a man who ought to have known somewhat better, pursuing his daughters for stealing his gods! stolen gods! cunning Laban, wert thou in earnest? These were little household divinities, about the size of a man's thumb, which Rachel concealed under her breech for the sake of so much

metal, possibly to re-cast them into a utensil for the same situation. Miserable! that any man should trouble himself about such trifling trumpery! Had they been like the strapping gods of Nebuchadnezzar, or the Rhodian Apollo, their quantity of gold or brass might have given them a proportionable consequence. Now, you advocate for the unaided light of nature, either prove that all this, and ten thousand times more of the same kind, was perfectly rational and right; or give up the boasted sufficiency of that light for the important purposes of religion, virtue, and human happiness; and look out for some other light, more adequate to those purposes. Here, however you cry out, Hath not revelation been attended with as great a number of extravagancies, equally derogatory to God, and destructive of human happiness? I answer, By no means; yet confess, with so many and so great, that could they be at all charged to the account of revelation, and not wholly and justly retorted on yourself, I should throw away my pen, sit down in scepticism, and let the vessel drive. Far from patronizing the heretics, I insist, and all men must second me therein, that their opinions, at worst, were rational, and their practices innocent, in comparison of those I charge on your light of nature, which you insist, was all the light that mankind ever had, and you must vindicate, or give it up. But really and truly, not a single heresy among us all can be, with any colour of justice traced up to revelation, but to the obliquity and debauchery of that natural light, so idolized by yourself. You must own, that all men, calling themselves Christians, had that light, as well as you. How then, on your own axiom, could they possibly have deviated into so many differences and absurdities in regard to Christianity, every one of which you are obliged to defend, and indeed are ever ready to do it, but on occasions like the present, wherein you are distressed for an evasion, and vainly endeavour to turn the attack made on you into an objection to revelation. Take what course you will, the utter insufficiency of your natural light must for ever recoil upon you, as well from our heresies, as your own idolatries, with redoubled force. Talk no more about your light, which suffers us all to stray into every species of folly and wickedness, and so poorly defends its own aberrations. The light in a quaker lantern, though with singed windows, the dimmest light that ever presumed to call itself Christian, and indeed somewhat of kin to your own, is worth a thousand of it. It is to me most astonishing, how your natural knowledge of religion, so

far as religion is good for any thing, your natural knowledge of moral rectitude and obliquity in you and every other mortal, so clear and so well backed by the truth of actions; "the eternal fitness of things, and of actions to things; the sense of beauty in virtue, which sufficiently rewards itself, and of deformity in vice which sufficiently punishes itself, in the instant of either performance or committal; together with the strong moral sympathy," that natural instinct, whereby you feel through one another, as if you all had but one and the same heart; it is, I say, astonishing, that all these should have tolerated among you (for I speak, as you do, of all men) so many rapes, robberies, murders, wars, &c. in all ages of the world. Priestcraft, you say, accounts for it all. For a great deal, I confess, but not the thousandth part of it. But now (as to so much of it, or the whole, if you please), as you charge it to the account of priestcraft, I beg to know, how the artifice of priests could possibly have stolen in upon a world, so enlightened, so animated for virtue, and against vice such a mass of detested enormities, and so generally practised? How could it have carried with it a single individual, not to say, almost the whole human race, into the general practice of the most venial transgressions? On your way of talking, it might be as easy to kidnap nine tenths of our congress, and our parliament, the chief governor among the rest, at noonday, in the sight of all our army and volunteers, to ship them for America, and to sell them there for a shilling a-piece of paper money. Should any thing like justice be ever done to this state of our argument, it would certainly induce a wish, that revelation were resumed, were it not that revelation is considered as a satire on mankind, drawn forth from the bad hearts of those who have handed it to us; whereas the advocates of natural light, as if they had sat to themselves, give us so flattering a picture of mankind, so overrun with benevolence, and all the other virtues, so philosophical, so wise, so very good, that for our own credit, we cannot help admiring it as perfectly just and extremely like ourselves. To find fault with it is too humiliating; or to allow, that the ugly picture, done for us by revelation, carries a greater resemblance, is to own ourselves a very sad sort of creatures; to renounce our vanity and pleasures, and to sneak off into an abject state of fear and penitence. And now, sir, how hath virtue thriven under the moral tweedledum of your ethic writers and its present echo from our pulpits? You perceive, I believe, that though our fine folks like that tune much better, than one of

Corellis Solemn Strains, performed to a hymn, they are not much disposed to take the floor and dance to it; and that the few who are, trouble themselves but little about either your favourite tune, or their own steps.

10. For my own part, I with grief and shame confess, that I rather know what wisdom is than am wise. Knowledge and wisdom are very different things. Although I perfectly know the way to a distant town, and all the by-paths that branch from that way, yet, in travelling thither, if my limbs are weak, I may stumble; or if my eyes are bad, or my attention dissipated, I may strike off into some of those paths. A man absolutely blind, by taking a great deal of care, and feeling after that way, might haply find it better than I. The true wisdom of man undoubtedly is this,—first, to know what is that real happiness, in comparison of which all other enjoyments are but misery; secondly, to know how that happiness may be safely and surely obtained; and thirdly, in an uniform obedience of the heart and will to these two primary articles of wisdom, steadily to pursue the ways and means, pointed out by the second article, in order to the happy end. Nothing in mathematics admits of a clearer demonstration than this little chain of three links; and every thing in that, and other branches of knowledge, is infinitely trifling compared with this. The perpetual motion, the quadrature of the circle, and the longitude itself! what are they to this? Now, this wisdom is not to be derived but from 'the Father of lights;' and is no where to be found but in the true religion. To enjoy God to all eternity is true happiness. Christ, with the piety and virtue which he inculcates, is the only way to that happiness. The heart, the will, the whole soul, having received this doctrine from the understanding, with all their warmth, as coming immediately from Christ and his Holy Spirit, bear the man so high above this world, that he looks down at it as a very little thing, and on all the cares laid out upon it, and all the philosophy employed about it, as despicably trifling in themselves, and as fatally pernicious in their consequences. Yet this age of refinement in pride, vanity, and pleasure, must add philosophy to its other luxuries. Every blockhead must be a little Aristotle or Newton, just as every shopkeeper must affect the figure of a lord. But what would their philosophy avail them, if they could not erect it into a battery against religion? if it could not help them to stifle conscience, that troublesome inmate, so apt to clamour at knavery

and lewdness? There is a reciprocal intoleration between conscience and its effects, on the one side, and luxury, especially philosophical luxury, with its brood of vices, on the other; and who can endure their endless struggles? This, and infinite conceit, have produced a prodigious swarm of very minute philosophers, of whom many cannot so much as read; that flutter like gnats, about religion, biting, stinging, and perishing in their impotent attempts. With these, the appellation of philosopher, at first modestly assumed, as only a lover of knowledge, is now made to stand for a wise, or very knowing man. Under this honorary title they thrust into company with Paschal, Bacon, and Newton; and then, who should speak, who should declaim against religion, but they? In every corner we have a Robin Hood of these insects, who having heard that Newton was infallible in all his opinions, and a staunch Arian, set up for buzzing and biting at the Trinity. But now, as to Newton, though at a prodigious distance I venerate his memory as a most consummate mathematician, I cannot allow him the epithet of infallible, even in natural philosophy and mathematics, his grand fort, much less in matters of religion wherein I am able to prove him most grossly erroneous, and even contradictory. He is, after all, but a borrower from the ancients, as to both his principle of attraction, and his attempt to square the circle. After having fully refuted Des Cartes on the subject of a plenum, a business of but little difficulty, he calls in attraction to account for gravity, as one of his two great organs, whereby the planets and comets are carried round their orbits; and after having, with amazing ability, demonstrated the laws whereby this principle of attraction operates, and shewn, that this power is found in all bodies, which attract one another reciprocally in proportion to their respective quantities of matter and their distances, he dare not call this a property of matter, which perhaps he might have safely done; but sometimes resolves it into the power of God, rightly, in my humble opinion, and why not, as well as the centrifugal or progressive motion of the planets? but, unphilosophically, as other great philosophers maintain, who are for shutting God out of his own works. And sometimes, ashamed to give no account but the power of God for the principle whereon he grounds almost the whole of his philosophy, he insinuates, that attraction may be the effect of a subtile spirit, a sort of equivocation, whereby, if he means any thing, he must mean somewhat of the same, or a similar nature, with

the subtile matter of Des Cartes. All he says in reference to this subtile matter, for which he borrows the appellation of æther, he proposes as purely hypothetical. This fluid of his, he supposes, may surround the sun, and extend itself throughout the solar system; may be exceeding rare near the sun, and grow still denser and denser as its distance from that luminary increases; and endeavours to shew, that all he had ascribed to gravity and attraction, may possibly be thereby accounted for. This, however, he does in a way so futile and unsatisfactory, as, in that instance, to level the great Sir Isaac with the lowest class of thinkers and guessers. On this most important point he goes backward and forward, and wavers in a miserable manner. Here at best he is not absolutely infallible; but still less so in regard to the quadrature of the circle; wherein too he is but a borrower from Archimedes, and others, all prior to the age of Newton. For this (in my humble opinion, not very important purpose, and fitter to employ the talent of a philomath than a Newton) he and Leibnitz, much about the same time, struck out a fluxional method, which they both took for a demonstration. The mathematical disciples of these great men were, at first, of the same opinion, hallooing whatsoever came from them as infallible and perfect, but bitterly contending, some for Newton, and others for Leibnitz, as the first inventor. In England the genius of Newton was cried up as more than human, as somewhat above that of a created being, and still is by the servile crew. His apotheosis however began to be a little doubted of by a few, as soon as they found it had been borrowed, and on trial proved itself defective, and far short of a demonstration. On this, the mathematicians, blushing for their admiration, both of the author and the scheme, fell from the title they had given of a demonstration, to that of an *approximation*. What, after all! are we put off with an approximation only? We should be glad to know wherein this mathematical, is preferable to our old mechanical approximation. It would be hard upon the excise officers and supernumeraries, to go through a nice fluxion of infinitesimals in gauging a barrel of ale; and upon a surveyor of land, to give the acres, roods, perches, digits, in infinitesimals, and fractions of infinitesimals, in the dimensions of a common field. Query, however, whether there hath been any fluxional approximation really made? Objects, seen at a great distance, under a small angle, appear to be nearer to each other than they are; and then the great mathematician, working in a high cloud of in-

finitesimals, and seen by a little mathematician below in a dense fog of logarithms, may have seemed to baloon it nearer to the moon than he did. This disappointment reminds me of two lines in Boileau on the passage of the Rhine. That great poet, intending to give the world an epic on the subject, bids other poets celebrate the glorious exploits of Louis in other fields of action, and claims the arduous passage for himself, I suppose, as the most illustrious of the whole. Accordingly, he sets out with an invocation of Apollo and all the Muses, to aid him in the sublime attempt; but having brought his hero, with a huge army, to the river side, and described the formidable preparations of the allies on the other, he tells us, the generals of Louis, in the midst of no little swagger on his part, represented to him, how far it was beneath the majesty of the grand monarque to take the river, like a common soldier, and their arguments prevailed on a man not over rash in braving dangers of that sort. Then the poet, on a frisky tantrum of sublime, says,

> Louis, les animant de feu de son courage,
> Se plaint de sa grandeur, qui l'attaque au rivage.
>
> These Louis fir'd, and curs'd his royal rank,
> Which fix'd his courage in the hither bank.

On which the parody of Prior is remarkable,

> And Boileau summon'd all the tuneful nine,
> To sing how Louis did—not pass the Rhine.

It is to me astonishing, that the grand monarch of mathematics did not better consider two things; in the first place, the insignificance of a quadrature to every purpose, but his own glory; and in the next place, how impossible it was for him to succeed, even as to that, by the method he took. Surveyors, carpenters, gaugers, &c. going on merely mechanical principles, do well enough without squaring circles. They suppose, which is true, that the diameter of a circle is nearly equal to one-third part of the circumference; and stand in need of no other approximation. If it is *self-evident*, that the circle and its diameter reciprocally define each other, how is it possible to prove it? Is not this enough for use and practice? And why then insufficient for science? And perhaps, after all, the mathematicians had better go back to mechanics, from whence all the science of lines and surfaces did certainly originate, that by trying up, as the carpenters call it, they may learn of the homely mother what they can never be taught by the Lady Geometry, as she is now tricked

out in fringes, furbelows, gauzes; oiled with fluxions, and powdered with polygons, infinitesimals, nonsense; and habituating herself to prattle in an affected cant of hard words, so mysterious, that it is the work of half a life to understand it. Why should knowledge affect to be mysterious? Possibly, if in imitation of her great grandmother, Truth, she went naked, we should admire her the more. No sooner are the terms, diagonal, and square, known to any one, than his assent to an exact commeasurement between them respectively, is forced. The same is true of a diameter and its circle, although it is still said by mathematical men, that there can be no exact ratio or proportion found between a right line and a circle. As to the latter, the diameter is found, suppose mechanically to be nearly one-third of the circumference; why nearly and not exactly, is hard to say (and not worth the saying), for twenty-two miles (in this case, measurement alone is to be considered) may be exactly divided by three into seven miles, and four-twelfths of a mile. If a greater degree of exactness is sought for, it is probably more than mathematical demonstration is adequate to. If a man cannot find the ratio between the water in his tea-kettle, and in the ocean, is he never to take his breakfast? If a mathematician knows not the different distances between his chair and the farther corner of his study; and between that chair and the parish church, by actual measurement, is he never to go to church till he finds the ratios of those distances mathematically without the help of a rule, chain, or string? Every mortal who knows any thing of a square and its diagonal, knows, that said diagonal, and any side of its square are accurately commensurable; and if no man can find out how to demonstrate their commensurability, what matters it? Yet among the ablest mathematicians, a flat contradiction arises on the subject of a square and its diagonal. The latter cuts the former into two right angled triangles, exactly equal. Now the square of the diagonal is found by them to be equal to the squares of two sides of the former, though the length of every right line is exactly commensurable with the square of that line. Are there not then two ratios, and yet no ratio, between the diagonal of a square, and one of its sides? Is there not intuitively evident an exact proportion between the diagonal of a square and every one of its sides? And to lead to the knowledge of that proportion, is there not another between the square of that diagonal and the square of any side in the original square? Every mortal, that knows what a circle is,

and its diameter, knows, they are accurately commensurable ; but if no man can demonstrate that commensurability, what loss is this to mankind? These two are mysteries of nature, wherein somewhat is perfectly known, and somewhat utterly unfathomable, left perhaps to baffle the understandings of such as will not receive the plain doctrines of religion, on the word of God, because they cannot account for the depths, wherein those doctrines terminate. He who knows, the whole is greater than any of its parts, but how much greater, in regard to any particular whole and part, can never find but by weight or measure of that whole, and a given part. To look for any thing farther, or by any other mode of inquiring, is but to vaunt the force of his genius in having found out what nobody else could. If nothing is to be taken for a truth, that is not mathematically proved, a jury must not find a culprit guilty on ocular evidence, if he who gives it cannot mathematically prove that his eyesight may be depended on. He is no mathematician, but he can see as well as the best of them, and the prisoner at the bar must be hanged. If the square of a circle cannot be mechanically found, it will be in vain to attempt it by a polygon and fluxions, whereby the essential difference of a right line and a circle must be confounded and sunk, as no difference at all, and the angles of the polygon must cease to be angles. Making the lines of the polygon infinitely short, and the angles infinitely obtuse, will never hinder them to be still right lines and angles, nor bend them into a curve of any sort. An angular circle, whether mathematical or not, is indubitably nonsensical. It may be wished, that the venders of infinitesimals would also furnish us professedly, with a system of unintelligibles, alias transcendentals, alias nonsensicals. These two latter terms of art would not be so apt to frighten the ladies, and young beginners, as polygons and infinitesimals. If in some degree, I mistake the great Sir Isaac, the much abler interpreters of him, through whom I see him, are to blame. Some of them have (and I hope fairly) stripped his opinions and reasonings of their mathematically mysterious dress, so as to bring them down to the test of common sense. Among these I get into some acquaintance with him ; and take not half the liberty with him that he hath taken with the Holy Ghost, speaking in terms intelligible to all men. As to those very minute things, which he calls infinitesimal, that is infinitely divisible, or divided, common sense absolutely denies, there are any such. To human apprehension,

duration and space alone, because infinite, are infinitely divisible. But no assignable portion of duration, i. e. time ; no assignable portion of space, particularly as occupied by matter, can be infinitely divisible, because, in regard to any part of duration or space, there is respectively a point, a minimum or ultimum, where such divisions become perfectly individual. Perhaps Sir Isaac only supposes, that division may go downward for ever. But there can be no such thing, even in supposition, as lines or angles of this sort. The radii must absolutely destroy either the circle, or the polygon: the circle, if some of them do not go home to it, or pass beyond it in adjusting themselves to the polygon, whether projected within, or without it; or the polygon, if they adjust themselves to the circle. The idea of an infinite too must be lost. It is as ridiculous to 'say infinitely little in' regard to quantity or dimension, as to say, 'infinitely, few, in regard to number.' Even to this absurdity they make approaches by what they call negative numbers, that is, numbers less than 0 'nought,' a term, whereof, as standing for a nonentity, they cannot possibly have any idea or conception. Yet, setting this, an abstract number on paper to represent things positively existing, they boldly count downward, till they come to a number of 'nothings,' exceeding any positive number that can be assigned. Now, in good earnest, where is the sense of annumerating 'nothings;' of adding 'nothing' to 'nothing;' of subtracting 'nothing' from 'nothing;' of multiplying 'nothings;' and of dividing 'nothing?' Fractions are an arithmetic of realities, or wholly useless. But whoever attempts an arithmetic of 'noughts' below units, instead of descending the stairs of science to minutenesses, is only, without knowing it, climbing the ladder of nonsense, for he is forced to have recourse to something, in order to work on nothing, and must lose sight of his negative, of which he hath no idea, and can use only an unmeaning term. This is one of those tricks, made use of by the vanity of philosophers to set common sense a staring. This is a mystery, not of nature, but of men's own making, wherein somewhat imperfectly known, ends in jargon or nonsense. Quantity, downward, dwindles to a point, and loses itself in nothing, long before it can become infinitely small; and number can never sink below unity, for, in truth, there cannot be any such thing as a negative quantity, or a negative number; but infinite must ever be a negative, and consequently can never be the epithet of either quantity or number in finites, upward or down-

ward. No aggregate therefore of infinitesimals (could infinitesimals be supposed) can ever produce an answer to *quot?* or *quantum?* The talk of such things is nothing better, than artificial nonsense, and the mere dotage of mathematics. Consistently with common sense, infinite can go only upward, for there is no infinite, but one, that is, God. Space and duration are his attributes. How much is it to be wished, that poor little man, of an understanding so extremely limited, would cease to talk of infinites, which the highest angel of light cannot so much as think of, in the plural, which to speak of as our philosophers, our reasoning worms, have done, is arrogance and blasphemy! I wont say, witchcraft, though there was a time, when mathematicians and magicians were synonymous. It is also much to be wished, that men, but a few inches above us in understanding, would not endeavour, as they do, to ram their idle and conceited speculations down the throats of us poor creatures in the low class of logic and common sense, by giving a dash of infidelity along with their infinitesimals, that we may stare, gape, and transfer our modicum of faith from God to them. The very narrow capacity of man can proceed but a little way in the investigation of knowledge, the most obvious and familiar; far less in deep and abstruse matters; but, excepting as to one particular object, is wholly at a loss when it presumptuously attempts the consideration of infinity. To this it is so totally inadequate, that, on the comparison, it appears humble and modest, when it endeavours to fathom the ocean, and measure the heavens with an inch of line. 'The ox knows his feeder, the ass his master's crib,' and the horse soon finds his length of tether; but the philosopher cannot discover that he is but a finite creature, that his line of investigation is exceeding short, and that he may attempt infinity, though he is unable to assign the ratio between the diagonal of a square, and one of its sides, or between a circle and its diameter, although he is perfectly sure there are two such ratios. Miserable! But to relieve himself from these difficulties, which to a common workman seem no difficulties at all, he hath recourse to infinity (such is his vanity), and here finds himself distracted, disappointed, lost. He forgets that infinity is a negative, and never can, even by supposition, become a positive, but in God, in whom alone it is essential; and, as if he knew it to be a property of numbers and lines, he seeks, among what he calls the infinitesimals of these, the ratio of a diameter to its circle. He goes out of his depth, and so out

of mine, to follow him, in this abyss of mud, where both of us are forced to think and speak in the tritical figure, called nonsense. He finds one infinite less than another, precisely in the same sense and respect, for instance, in the divisibility of matter, not considering that a greater infinite necessarily bounds a less of the same kind, and reduces it to a finite. He drops the distinction between indefinite, which may, and infinite, which may not, be measured or computed. Here he plunges, and throws up such a quantity of mathematical stuff in crabbed terms, and long elaborate calculations, that neither he nor any other mortal can form a competent judgment of the matter. This only we are all sure of, that there can be no calculus of infinites, if he had them to work on, no more than there can be of nothings. It is to me self-evidently plain, that there is an exact proportion between a circle and its diameters; between one side of a square and the diagonal of that square; and that matter, if extension is essential to it, may be infinitely divided, though a flat contradiction, both in ideas and terms, must arise between the number of parts, into which one cubical inch of gold, and two cubical inches of the same metal, may be divided, which must produce one infinite, just twice as numerous as another, a piece of philosophical nonsense, not less gross nor palpable than saying that a thousand and five hundred are exactly equal, and very unequal. These, and such like points, so naturally obvious, and yet so unfathomable to human investigation, seem to be left as mathematical mysteries, to baffle the pride of human understanding, and to expose philosophy to contempt, when it attacks the mysteries of religion, after having left many of its own behind it, attempted indeed, but never solved. It is not altogether my fault, that, in this philosophical instance, I am forced to write nonsense as well as my betters. Be these things, however, as they may, might not one have expected that the almost deified mathematician, who had so many infinites to dispose of, might have allowed one to Christ, and not have 'limited the Holy One of Israel?' Newton held the Bible to be the word of God himself, consequently how came he not to see that there is but one God; that the universe was made by Christ, and that Christ, in a thousand passages of both Old and New Testament, is asserted to be that one God; nay, that he himself asserts it by Moses, Isaiah, St. John, &c. and denies the being of any other God? What then can we think of Newton as a reasoner, when he disbelieved the infinity, *i. e.* the divinity, of

Christ? How came he to set up his own opinion against the express, the repeated, word of God himself? He could see little, surely, if he could not see the flat contradiction, in this most important case, between God and him. It is an old and just observation, that no man of sense can long continue to be an Arian. Revelation and the Bible must be given up, or the proper and true divinity of Christ must be believed. There is, there can be, no medium. There can be no medium between maintaining, that Christ, who asserts it, is really and truly God, and giving him up as a most impious impostor. Pardon me, blessed Jesu! for writing the horrible words, as I detest them from the depths of my soul. As to the dignity of our Redeemer, whereon depend all the essential principles of our holy religion, and the eternal salvation we hope for through him, we have authority to rest our faith on, infinitely superior to that of Newton, and all the philosophers and mathematicians, of all the Clarkes, Hoadlys, &c. that ever lived. If we must talk of infinites, we have the sole infinitely wise Author of truth to depend on for information concerning the respect we ought to pay to the Redeemer of mankind. When St. Stephen gave his life for Christ, whom he then saw at his Father's right hand, on the throne of heaven, he left this world on principles very different from those of fluxions and infinitesimals. Yet no man since hath thought or died on better reasons than he did. The true and real divinity of our blessed Saviour are so amply, so clearly set forth by the Fountain of Truth in his holy Scriptures, that there is no room left for the reason of him, who believes in those Scriptures, to doubt or balance on the important subject. But were this point less thoroughly enforced therein on reason and faith, a very short comparison of the difficulties on both sides, for some there seem to be, must result in a full and final decision. On the Arian side, reason, or somewhat which the vanity of a man takes for reason in himself, objects to a personal distinction in God, that infinite being, so perfectly one. Again, although there is not a single passage which denies the divinity of Christ throughout the whole Scriptures, there are some which indirectly, yet strongly, seem to militate against it. But is any man so perfectly acquainted with the infinitely incomprehensible Being, as to be sure there is no distinction in that Being analogous to the personal distinction of one man from another? And may not the passages of Scripture, which, at first sight, seem to favour the Arian opinion, be interpreted fairly of

Christ, as a son, and a man? Nay, must they not be so interpreted, since, in the first place, those Scriptures every where absolutely deny the being of any God but one? Since those Scriptures so often affirm Christ to be God? since, although in those Scriptures Christ so often speaks of himself as Son and messenger of his Father, there is not to be found a single intimation that he is an inferior God, or a creature only, deputed by his Father to create, and then to redeem the world? It is easy to see on which of these sides right reason must decide, if the word of God is allowed to speak to reason, or if reason, so instructed, is permitted to speak to our faith. No, philosophy sets itself above faith; and, in this instance, the philosophy even of Newton is so far below reason, as to terminate in downright absurdity of contradiction, probably to teach us feebler thinkers, not any longer to idolize our wretched understanding. Let Newton, therefore, say what he will, I repeat, 'without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. By him (Christ) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.' Between these plain passages, and the assent of a plain man, who believes the Scriptures, is a ratio so easily demonstrated, that Newton and Clarke, both believing in the Scriptures, must have perceived it, had they not been more taken up with the ratio of a right line to a circle, as a matter of greater consequence to their mathematical characters; for, I cannot think, they intended directly to give the lie to God's word. Inquisitiveness, or a too ardent thirst of knowledge, was among the first faults of mankind; and though it is found by experience, that 'he who increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow,' at least in a thousand instances; yet our philosophers and mathematicians still go on to prove themselves the children of Eve. Ignorance is frequently better than knowledge. To consult with a soothsayer about futurity is double folly, both because the soothsayer knows nothing of the matter, and it were better for the consulter not to foresee either the good or evil he is to meet with. God, in his mercy, hides the latter, and in his wisdom the former, from us. If a man knows not how to square a circle, he may do well enough without it; nay, may do much better without

the greater part of those refinements whereby foreign articles of luxury, the food of vanity and vice, are daily flowing in upon us, insomuch that we, by their means, are perpetually growing more effeminate, more feeble in mind and body, more incapable of bearing the unavoidable afflictions of life, and of resisting those impressions of heat and cold, which people less indulged can easily withstand, can even enjoy as amusements. In nothing was the wisdom of Lycurgus so manifest as in shutting out wealth and luxury from the people of Sparta. While they continued obedient to his laws, they had nothing to incite an invader, and in case of an attack made on their persons, one Spartan was a match for three enemies of other nations; and then, exclusive of these considerations, they lived more happily in plain clothes, and on their black broth, than any other people on earth. These things were easily had, and with these, health of body and tranquillity of mind came as inseparable companions. Happy ignorance of evil! At what an expense do we manufacture in our own country, and import from all the other countries in the world, the incitements to knavery, robbery, murder! The fuel of pride and anxiety! The materials of sickness, death, and wars! In the acquisition of these things, the fine arts are admired, philosophy applauded, and mathematics adored. So debauched are we, that we cannot so much as imagine, simplicity, ignorance, and what we call poverty, could possibly make us happier. It may soon please God, however, to disabuse us of our gross mistake, and, by destroying one half of a wicked people, and impoverishing the rest, teach them again to believe in his power, who were infidels to his indulgence. I am a false prophet if the period of this revolution is not making a hasty approach towards us. Sure I am, nothing but a speedy revolution in our principles and practices can prevent it. But 'the day and hour' of this visitation is hid from us by Him who perfectly knows both, that we may take heed that we may 'watch and pray,' as men 'who know not when the time is,' and not as those time-serving wretches do, by looking into an almanack find out when they are to be devout for a week, that they may go to the Lord's table on a great festival, having devoted the rest of the year to their pleasures and sins. Superstition and folly may content themselves with so base a kind of service; but Christ, who died for them, will not be so put off. Our watchfulness should be awakened by our ignorance, lest 'our master coming suddenly when we look not for him, should find us sleeping' in our sins,

and in a stupid indifference to him and his religion. We know not the day or hour of our death, when our trial and book of account shall be shut up; but we know, we must all die, and perhaps in the space of one hour or moment. This is knowledge enough of futurity for Christian virtue, which to approve itself to an all-knowing Master, should be unforced, uniform, and ever on its guard.

11. The economist alone is, or can be, an honest man.

12. No sum of money can make a man rich.

13. He is rich who saves a penny a year, and he poor who runs behind a penny in a year.

14. All men, more or less, and many, too much, are excited to laudable exertions by praise and esteem. The generous and ingenuous souls are most apt to be stimulated by this noble motive; and, what may seem surprising, instead of pride, derive humility from it. Their enterprises are often too arduous to succeed. Hence they are mortified with a sensibility of their own weakness, but not wholly discouraged. The active man, who climbs a mountain, is not more apt to find himself fatigued, than the lubbard in only going up stairs. The unaspiring fool hardly ever becomes sensible of his own inability, for he hardly ever puts himself to a trial; and besides, no fool ever knew himself to be a fool. He is a wise man indeed, or soon will be, who can sometimes find out that he himself is a fool.

15. The infidels say, if our religion is necessary, why hath the distribution of it been so partial? Why is it not found in all parts of the world, even to this day? We answer, It was given to all mankind from the beginning, namely, to our two common parents, Adam and Noah, but perverted by their posterity into gross idolatry, and the worship of stocks, stones, and devils. It hath been offered to all men, but not forced on any, and therefore no just cause of complaint lies either against the goodness of Providence, or the necessity of our religion, if so many have refused it. But we ask the infidel, to whom it is amply offered, why he persists to refuse it? Hath he not full proof of its truth and excellence? Hath he fairly examined that proof? Or does he perceive, that understanding, health, prosperity, with other gifts of Providence, which he values more than religion, are equally distributed to all men? In regard to these, he is still less satisfied with his portion, excepting in regard to the first, than he is with the pagan's portion of Christianity. His murmurs in this objection are but a pretence; for he would much rather wish there

were no God than no devil. He is but the devil's blasphemous bully, who, when he had consumed his fortune in vanity, gaming, and other vices, cries out to God, Take back the rascally existence given me; and shoots himself. Existence! What then? Is he sure his existence is to end at the muzzle of the pistol, and not be prolonged to a future account? There is not among us a single infidel, but of this sort, though the greater number of them are not so desperate in regard to criminal pleasures, which they wish to protract a little longer.

16. Are all mankind of one species, and descended from a common parent? No, saith a Scotch lord, too proud to suffer a negro, or perhaps a poor Highlander, to claim any manner of kindred with him. Well, and if such are not of the same species with my lord, he might kill and eat them, only that the negro or Highlander is not fat enough to be good eating, as he does a sheep? It would not be going much farther, than oppressing, impoverishing, starving them, practices of a very lordly kind. A great lawyer, turned into a lord, is not the most likely person in the world to give Moses credit for any thing he reports, and least of all for any sort of equality between so elevated a personage and a poor dunghill-born mortal, crusted in scabs, and but half defended from the snow by a few rags. Yet most certain it is, that every animal knowing, or capable of knowing, its Maker; every animal morally free, and accountable for its actions, with a conscience; every animal who hath the use of reason, and speech, in arbitrary words; who walks upright on two legs, but unfledged, and can sometimes laugh; whether of a fair or dark complexion, like dyed wool or silk; whether a lord or a peasant, is a brother to, and of the same blood with, all other animals, distinguished by these peculiar characteristics. Struck with these, a Dane may ask a negro how he came to be so black? And the negro may as sensibly ask the Dane, how he came to be so white? If neither of them can tell, I can, though but of little learning or philosophy. The Dane, and his ancestors, having for many generations lived in a very cold country, came forth bleached and fair. The Germans, a little nearer the sun, are generally of a little darker cast. The French, a little more to the southward, darker than they. The Spaniards, inhabitants of a warmer climate, considerably darker than the French. The Moors, near the tropic, are only not black. The Æthiopians and negroes living between the tropics, under the perpendicular bask of the sun, from generation to generation, and shut in from a mixture with

fairer people by Mount Atlas, and an extensive desert, for at least fifty centuries, are after all, not absolutely black, but so near it, that no other epithet can so well express their colour. As to other distinctions of hair, noses, lips, &c. they are certainly shrivelled by the same influence of the sun, though we cannot so easily account for it. The inhabitants of Indostan make a near approach to the colour of the negroes; but having always lain open to a mixture of fairer people from the north, by whom they have been frequently conquered, they and the Moors differ but little in point of complexion. As for the intertropical Americans, of a colour between dark olive and black, they always lay open, to a mixture of people both from the north and the south, and had their air perpetually tempered by cold winds from the snowy tops of the Andes. Climate and food make considerable differences among both blacks and whites of different countries, between black and black in some countries, and white and white in others. But, what should put a final end to this forced and futile controversy, is, that the males and females of all distinctions among rational animals, on cohabitation, produce a fruitful offspring, and no mules, as is ever the case between different species of brutes. Thus, I hope, it clearly appears, that the horrid opinion of the aforesaid lord, and of some others, who echo his barbarous philosophy, carries with it no shew of reason, much less of that benevolence, with which infidelity hath long affected to plume itself. If man to man is no more akin, than tiger to wolf, and if wealth and poverty, lordship and peasantry, set us still at a greater distance, than white and black, which I am sure they do, it will be a difficult matter to prove, that philosophical benevolence can have any right to come in competition with Christian charity, which, founding itself on a natural brotherhood, unites us all into one body of Christ. Is then commercial barbarity, which for a long time hath encouraged one part of mankind to buy and sell another, examining all their limbs, and looking into their mouths, as into those of horses, to make a judgment of their age and soundness, going to establish itself on philosophical principles, and among a people, not unacquainted with the name of Christ? Most horrible indeed! Woe to that country, whose pride and luxury are supported by such a commerce, and that commerce by such philosophy!

17. Another attack on the credit of Moses as an historian, similar to the former, originates from Moses himself, who tells us, that Cain went into the land of Nod from the face of his father

Adam, and there built a city. From hence the infidels conclude, there were Pre-Adamites, or Co-Adamites at least. As to Pre-Adamites, the supposition of such is nonsense in itself. Men before the first man is too gross a solecism to be palmed on any historian, for Moses says, that Adam called his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all flesh, and calls his first man by the name of Adam; whereas, had there been another man prior to him, he might just as well have taken up the generation of mankind from that other, as from the husband of Eve and father of Cain. Besides, the Pre-Adamites of infidels must have been created before there was a world for them to live upon. But as to Co-Adamites, or another species of mankind, formed about the same time with Adam, a thing not impossible, Moses absolutely precludes the fact, in setting Eve forward as the mother of all the human race. I have certainly as good a right to quote Moses for Moses, as any man can have to quote him against himself. Take which side we will in this argument, we must ground ourselves on Moses, for we have none to quote, but him. But now, as to Co-Adamites, the vulgar chronology sends Cain into the land of Nod in the year of the world 125, or at most in 139. This the infidel says, was too early for the peopling of that distant country, if there were in the world none but the posterity of Adam and Eve. This chronology, however disputed, as it really is, and that on good grounds, affords time enough for a considerable progeny in the single line of Adam and Eve, who were commanded and enabled, to increase and multiply, so as to people a small extent of country in one hundred and twenty-five years. Now it is not so much as intimated, how far the land of Nod was from the place of Adam's abode. It was probably but five or six miles. Neither are we told, of how many houses the city consisted, which Cain built. In the first ages, when every father was a prince, and governed his family patriarchally, the bounds of his little community were very much circumscribed, and his subjects few. In those days, and for thousands of years afterward, every association, though exceedingly limited as to numbers, was called a city, because governed by a police of its own. The infidel himself does not expect to hear of a Babylon or Rome at that time. From this he flies to America, and insists, that so extensive a country could not have been peopled, as it was found to be when the Europeans began to settle in it, by the posterity of Noah. The Atlantic ocean was too wide for

the navigation of early ages, and it is but rational to believe, that it was as early inhabited, as the other three parts of the world. Very early, no doubt, it was; but how early, no mortal in any part of the world can so much as guess. A great number of very learned writers have furnished us with, I believe, fifty or sixty opinions, not touching the time, but the mode, of peopling America, all laying it down as a maxim, that Noah was the ancestor of the native Americans. I shall not give myself the trouble of canvassing these opinions, whereof I think there is but one which merits notice. It was certainly a matter, within the bounds of possibility, for either the north-western inhabitants of Europe, or the north-eastern of Asia, to have passed into the north of America, at any time when they found themselves uncomfortably situated in their old place of abode. If the cold in so high a latitude seems to forbid the migration, it may as well be thought to facilitate it by furnishing a bridge of ice and frozen snow to pass on. Traverses not immensely easier, nor less bold, are by the help of rein-deer, still made in Lapland and Samoedia, on parts of the gulf of Finland, and the White sea, as well as over extensive tracts of land, deeply covered with snow. It is hard to say how early the Norwegian Laplanders, Islanders, and Greenlanders, living wholly on fish, might, in quest of this necessary article, have passed, or by the winds been forced to pass, from one of these countries to the other. Who can tell however, whether the passage from Kamskatka to California might not have encouraged an Asiatic migration in a better manner? Or as islands in the ocean are every age rising, or falling, who can say, there were none of old, now sunk, which might have lain in the course of such migration, and served as step-stones to an imperfect navigation? But here having mentioned, not begged, the supposition of several small islands, swallowed by the sea, I must not forget the proof which may be given, and ought to be insisted on, of one great island, or part, if we will, of a continent, which might have carried the posterity of Noah to America with safety and convenience, as speedily as they could think of making the journey. In the Timæus of Plato, Solon is said to have heard from an Egyptian priest, that there was in the old archives of his country mention made of an island, as large as Asia and Europe, called Atlantis, lying so near to the westward of the latter, that its inhabitants, invading this part of the world, had carried all before them, till they came to Greece, when news was

brought them that their whole island was sunk in the sea by an earthquake. Although this account is a little too extraordinary to be merely matter of invention, and although the sea wherein this very extensive track of land was said, somehow or other, to have been swallowed up, hath time out of mind been called the Atlantic ocean; yet, I confess, it had in my mind the air of a fable, and the rather, as it originated from an Egyptian record, until the time of that earthquake which destroyed Lisbon; which shook all the English colonies in North America, as far westward as the Apalachian mountains, the whole Atlantic, and all Europe. This proves to demonstration, that a cavern there still is under all the aforesaid sea and lands, which gave room for the rarified air and water to produce this enormous phenomenon. Over this the Atlantic lands might have stood as a roof, which thrown down by an earthquake, were covered by the sea, but supported by mountains, standing here and there on the floor of the cavern, and some higher than the rest, directly under the British and other Atlantic islands, yet extant, leaves still underneath a vacuity, sufficient for the play of those vapours, which, in our time, have acted with a force so powerful and extensive. It was perhaps not improbable, that the retreat of the sea, on all the shores of the world was chiefly owing to the possession, taken by the waters, of the space formerly occupied by the Atlantic. The cavern underneath, though still of vast depth, hath probably lost as much of its vacuity, as the waters of the ocean have since taken possession of over its roof, so as nearly to equal the spaces lost below and gained above. The soundings, which, it is said are found, all along, from the west of Ireland to the banks southward of Newfoundland, do still farther encourage the notion of land, sunk, in that track, under the sea, and nevertheless somehow supported there, to a height, not often found in such extensive parts of the ocean. This idea, built a great deal more on fact than theory, may help to realize the Egyptian record, and account for the peopling of America, whereof the Atlantis might have made a part, or at least have lain as contiguous to it on that side, as it did on this to Europe. Be this as it will, the moose-deer, the fossil bones of elephants, and many other things, found both in Europe and America, enforce a probability, that a passage once lay open for other creatures, as well as for men, to form a communication between these two parts of the world. Nay it is averred, that some conformity, hath been found, even in particu-

lar words, between the language of the old Irish, and those of the inhabitants about Hudson's bay, Terra-Labradore, and Nova-Scotia. It were to be wished, that the Swedes, Danes, Irish and English, would look a little farther into this matter, than they have yet done. There are customs, too remote from nature, and too extraordinary, for whole nations, that never had any communication with one another, to have gone into, for instance, circumcision in parts of Great Tartary, where the coldness of the climate did not prescribe the practice. One, still farther from the common road of invention, is a custom, that hath obtained, from time immemorial, among the Laplanders, and among the native Irish, who in some places still practise it, which is this; in some disorders, and to make themselves hardy, they build a sort of oven (some of them I have been shewn) wherein they set a large stone, almost red hot, beside this stone the patient sits down stark naked, and shutting the enclosure, so as to let in but little air, continues there until he is half liquified into sweat, and then rushing out, rolls himself in snow, or in cold water, always close by his oven. As this is the method of hardening iron, I do not recommend it to any but iron men. However, the same method of cure is universally practised by all the northern Americans, who can as easily and exactly tell you when and where Æneas's nurse was buried, as when this custom first obtained among them. It is however a clear point with me, that they must have brought it with them from the east. Would, I could say, when, and prove it so as that an infidel must be forced to believe it, I say, forced, because nothing less would do with him. The American men appearing without beards hath been a sufficient hint with infidels to prove them to be of a different species from the Noachidæ, and will as justly prove us to be so when shaved, for the Americans pluck out the hairs of their beards with little instruments, similar to our tweezers. This however may file with their other arguments for the same purpose.

18. Having in the former paragraph intimated, that the sea hath observably retired from the land, all round the world, excepting, I mean, between or near the tropics, lest I should seem to have half begged a point, relative to the argument I was then handling, I think it proper to be somewhat more particular on that surprising subject. The reports made by travellers, of any observation, which I have either heard or read, uniformly vouch for this retreat of the sea. These were, by no means, necessary to

convince me of the fact, who have passed but a small portion of my time out of Ireland, as farther I need not have gone for a full proof on this behalf. An island, situated as this is, in the ocean, affords all the data required for the purpose. The surface of the sea, excepting as above excepted, must, in a calm, be every where equally distant from the centre of the globe. If, therefore, the sea hath every where round Ireland abated, it must have abated every where round the world. Now, this abatement must have been owing to one or other of these two things; either the waters must have subsided, or the land must have been elevated. The land might have been elevated in some places, but not in many, not by any means in all. It is ridiculous to suppose, that subterraneous fires have pushed up, and that so equally, the whole habitable part of the globe. If, therefore, the ocean hath retired from the shores, as above asserted and presently to be proved, either great parts of the waters have been annihilated, or have broken in upon some part of the land, equivalent to its abatement on the lands elsewhere. But the annihilation of so much water, or of even any particle of matter, in the world, is too much surely for infidelity to believe. It follows then, that if the sea hath made so general a retreat, it must have made some particular and proportionable encroachment on the land. That it hath made the retreat mentioned, is evident to the most cursory observer, who sees on both the eastern and western coasts of Ireland huge hills of sea-sand thrown up, and some of them to more than a hundred perpendicular feet above the highest spring tides at present; who sees, that several of these hills now stand a mile or two within land; and who sees, that the sea now never rises nearly on a level with, nor approaches, the bases of those hills, within a mile or two, and not even in the most violent in-blowing storms. That those hills were raised by such storms, some thousands of centuries ago, and at once somewhat higher than the then level of the sea, I grant; but they neither could be then, nor can the like hills now, be raised to so great a height above that level, above which the recent hills of sea-sand do never rise more than thirty or forty feet, and being exposed to the immediate action of the sea, are frequently washed away to the lowest grain, and thrown up in other places, while the more inland downs stand untouched, and as immoveable, as the Alps themselves. These ocular data considered, we cannot suppose, that the sea rose in ancient times less than thirty or forty perpendicular feet higher than it does at present.

To account for this by the comparatively minute encroachment of the sea here and there upon the land, is saying nothing which observation can vouch for; besides, in this case, I shall have a right to insist on the gradual encroachments of the land on the sea, as in Egypt, to a far greater extent, which must have proportionably raised the waters of the sea, supposing the abatement of the waters not to have been the principal cause of that encroachment. If by the loss of Atlantis, and by the wash of soil from the mountains, generally too steep to have been arable, the animal world hath literally lost ground, the retreat of the sea from the land, by laying bare the most fertile land, now possessed and cultivated, hath perhaps made an equivalent amends. A man is naturally led to this acknowledgment of providential goodness by standing on one of our highest sand hills, and from thence taking a view of thirty or forty miles square, which in many places he may do, of the finest countries now enjoyed by mankind, but proved by his elevated situation to have been once the resort of cod, turbot, &c. The whole Delta or Lower Egypt was gained in this manner; and by far the greater part of the lands in North America, occupied by the English, were probably added to the habitable part of the world by the same recess of the sea. At the shores they rise but a few feet above the sea, and continue low and flat to a great extent westward. Almost every where they are covered with a pretty deep bed of sand; and sea shells, in large parcels, are found some hundreds of miles from the sea, mouldering on or near the surface of the ground. How much more of the like character may be observed in other parts of the world, I know not, nor would it be necessary to support the point I have been speaking to. Although the rotation of the earth round its axis raises and keeps the ocean seventeen miles higher between the tropics, at least under the equator, than it is near the poles; it cannot be supposed, that this elevation hath been always increasing, so as to lay bare the lands I have been alluding to in higher latitudes. Were this the case, mount Atlas must have been under water long since, though the ancient fabulists thanked it for not suffering the skies to fall on their heads. But I have reason to think, that, in fact, the recess of the sea from the land, between the tropics, and near them, is as observable as about Ireland. So flat is the country about the river Gambia, that the tide flows there into the land some hundreds of miles, though they rise in the ocean but about five feet. And the country, on each hand, to a great distance, is very near as

sandy as that of Pennsylvania, and all southward to Cape Florida, inclusive. Rice grounds and swamps abound every where in the adjacencies of this river. What hath been said here of Gambia, is, I believe, as true of the river of Senegal, or the other and greater branch of the Niger and its adjacencies.

19. At least since the days of Bishop Hare, a man of more learning than judgment, and even before him, a jingling sort of objection hath been repeatedly echoed against the style of the holy Scriptures by all the class of infidels, that it is figurative, metaphorical, allegorical, parabolical, &c. From hence obscurity and uncertainty of interpretation have been inferred by them all. It is however plain, first, that in no language, nor on any subject of discourse, is it possible for mankind to express themselves, in regard to their general or abstracted thoughts, without borrowing a great part of their terms or words from sensible objects and operations; secondly, that of all expressions or terms, these are found to be both the most intelligible, and the most beautiful; and, thirdly, that in the holy Scriptures these are, wherever it is intended they should be so, the most easily understood, and the most powerfully affecting. The objection itself can find no other terms, whereby to utter its malignity, than figurative terms, as may be seen by considering those I have just taken from their mouths, and others of the like import and use. It is not a little uncouth in the philosophers and mathematicians to urge a plea, so directly against themselves, who abound with them on all occasions, on many indeed wherein they use them, not for want of any more common and more easy terms, but purely to darken what they are saying, and give it an air of depth and mystery. The ellipsis, the parabola, the hyperbola, the diameter, the diagonal, are of this sort, and perhaps are unavoidable; but surely the same excuse cannot be made for calculation, fluxion, planet, comet, orbit, planes of an orbit, all translated from one thing to another, all mathematically figuring mere abstract ideas by objects of sight, much less for the squares and cubes of spaces, numbers and times. Had they not been studious of unnecessary ornament, or desirous of enveloping their little ordinary thoughts in scientifical fogs, they might, for purposes like these, have found plainer words, which the writers of technical dictionaries, and the explainers of their philosophical oracles, are forced to find. Tradesmen, philosophers, mathematicians, and I know not who, may, all of them, be allowed their mysteries, and their mystical way of talking; but a

metaphor or parable in Christianity is not to be tolerated, though every body knows its meaning, and feels its force.

20. In speaking, there are really but three stops, as to time, the full stop (.), the semicolon (;), and the comma (,). Interrogation and admiration, are not concerned with the breathing of the speaker, but fall, according to the sense of the period, into one or other of the three aforesaid times; and as to the parenthesis, it should follow, and be followed, by either of the two last, but should never be too long for the one or the other of them. As to the colon (:) as defined and used, it is, as to time too near the full stop to make an equal, or any determinate division, of time or breathing, between the full stop and that which is commonly called a semicolon. Any one, much accustomed to speak aloud in public, if but moderately observant and careful, must have perceived the truth of what is said above.

21. It is, with some, a shrewd objection, as they think, to Christianity, that necessary as it makes itself to the real happiness of mankind, it hath even yet been known but to a small part of the human race, in comparison of the rest, who know, or could have known, nothing of it. What humility is here from philosophers, who magnify their own, and vilify the understandings of other men! Cannot such exalted genii walk by themselves on the strength of their own superior reason? Are they jealous of that reason, or of a system, adhered to by a minority? Must they have a multitude to go before them, or to carry them forward? A multitude, consisting almost entirely of the most stupid and ignorant of mankind? This objection hath not been heard from the mouths of any, who know what Christianity is, or at least, have given themselves the trouble to consider it with a small degree of attention. God never intended to force the faith of any one mortal. No, he hath left all men at liberty, and infidels in particular, to their idolized freedom of thought. Of this sort were the great majority of those, who saw our Saviour's miracles, heard his doctrines, and yet persecuted him to death. This kind of men, wedded to their vanity and other vices, abound in every age, and shut themselves up from every species of instruction, which leads to self-abasement, self-denial, and virtue. If therefore millions, having the requisite proofs offered to them, have rejected these proofs, I insist it was the fault of those rejectors, not the deficiency of the proofs, that they remained infidels. As to such in remote islands, &c. to whom those proofs have not

yet been offered, the Christians, real or pretended, who ought to have, long ago, preached it to them, they, not Christianity, are to answer for it; but by no means they, who had no opportunity of hearing. But we are told, that Paganism and Mahometism are in possession of the far greater part of the world. It may be so, and it would be idle, if not impossible on this occasion, to count noses, in a case where nothing but noses can be counted. Here I will fairly aggravate the objection, by allowing, that in Christian countries, where proof is fully afforded, there is not perhaps one in a thousand, who is, both in faith and practice, a real Christian; and what then? If it was impossible, and never so much as intended, that faith, and virtue the child of faith, should be forced on free beings, why in the name of common sense, are the means of notification to be arraigned? Do all Pagans and Mahometans believe or live up to their own avowed principles? Yet they all declare the necessity of so doing, as we do in regard to ours. Single out the real good even among them; do the same among Christians, and we shall have the majority, if living up to the dictates of right reason, and of original uncorrupted nature, is the character of a good man. After all, is a muster-roll, of mere nominal professors to decide on this subject? Is it not a fair comparison of principles, whether Christian, Mahometan, or Pagan, whereon the merits of this argument are to be determined? Most certainly, the point to be examined here is by no means geographical, but purely rational and moral, and comes out entirely in favour of Christianity, whether we look into the original history of these sorts of religion, or into the tendency and spirit of their principles. However, can the deistical objector count even noses with us on the footing of mere profession or on that of real virtue? So far from it, that, of his thin class of professors, he will find it difficult to assign a single individual, who, at least in Christian countries, is a Deist for any other reason, than because he was first, a slave to his passions and vices. For my own part, among mankind, with whom I pretend to no more than a superficial acquaintance, I know not who is a Christian, or who is not. This I say of myself, as a very indifferent searcher of my own heart. But one thing I perfectly know, that of all who have ever taken upon them to instruct mankind in religious principles, Christ Jesus hath given the most consummate proofs of knowledge in the subject; the most genuine demonstrations of kindness to the human race; and hath voluntarily suffered the

greatest indignities, and the most intense miseries for so doing. Him therefore I, as a plain rational creature, receive for my teacher and master, particularly as one who told me beforehand, that 'strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it,' and who asked, 'when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' Thus he hath prophetically prepared me (O that it were true of all other men) not to count his disciples in order to know, whether I should make one among them, that is whether I should follow a multitude, probably, 'to do evil,' or 'speak in a cause to decline after many;' and not rather lay the cross of Christ, heavy as it may at first seem, on the shoulder of my abominable nature, as a faithful follower of him, who through much tribulation hath gone before to prepare a place for me, if I can but attain unto it. Welcome all the flouts thrown on this species of singularity! And welcome all those persecutions, which may give me the most distant similarity of Him, who died for my poor soul! O my God and Saviour, deliver me from that broad way of the many, that crowd into it, and strive, who shall go foremost in it. If I am not a reprobate fool, I must easily see, in what each of these ways is certainly to end. For the sake of that blood, which thou hast poured out on the cross for all men, cause me feelingly to see both, and cause thy grace to be sufficient for me. But, O my soul, what hast thou to do in the broad way? It is so crowded, that there is no room for thee. And why shouldst thou, a poor little creature, intrude among the great ones. Canst thou afford to go to hell? In speaking on this subject three sorts of men ought to be distinguished; they who have heard the gospel, and embraced it with both understanding and heart; they who have heard, and withheld both their understandings and hearts from it; and they who never had an opportunity of hearing it. Of the two first sorts of men I need say nothing, as every rational creature knows what to think of them. But of the last it must be said, that 'God is the Saviour of all men, though especially of them that believe;' let me add, of them who would have believed, had it been in their power. No man will be called to an account for more than he hath received. As the sin of the first Adam hath passed upon all men, so the righteousness and sacrifice of the second Adam is imputed to all men, who make the best use of the lights they have received. God is not a respecter of men, but of his own justice and goodness. However, as in the house of Christ there are

many mansions, all seats of happiness, but one differing from another in glory, as stars do in splendour, infinite wisdom will find it easy to place every one where he ought to be. If some texts of Scripture seem to limit the divine mercy towards men who never could have heard of Christ, within narrower bounds, than I have here assigned, either I must have mistaken the meaning of those texts, or of that which I have just quoted, and of others, wherein Christ is set forth to us as the Saviour of all men.

22. About half a century ago, our philosophical infidels had found out, that they were of the same nature with God, and governed by the same eternal law which governs, in their opinion, the actions of the Deity himself. In a violent stretch of their benevolence, they were pleased to impart a modicum of this their own dignity to all the rest of our species, down to the poorest labourer, and, lower still, to the most flagitious villain on earth. But now these, so lately self-deified infidels, as if humbled far below what Christ requires, are adopting the notions of *materialism*, and sinking themselves to mere machines. Locke, in asserting, that matter may possibly think, and Des Cartes by maintaining, that brutes have no souls, though they certainly do think, have encouraged our modern philosophers in the opinion, held by Epicureans and Sadducees of old, that matter may be so modified, as to think, nay, that in men it is so modified. The frightful principles of the soul's immortality and future accountability must, somehow or other, be got rid of. The persuasion, if it can be entertained, that a man is nothing more than a lump of matter, or a mere body, would carry the infidel more than half way to his relief, for, if the whole man dies at once, and rots, *conclamatum est;* and then there will be little or no fear left of a reviviscence. With a certain bishop, a presbyterian minister, and their disciples, materialism is only a specious cover for that degree of Atheism, which consists in parrying the dread of a judgment to come, and, in regard to their sins and fears, its sole horrible consequence. We distinguish the species of things by their essential properties, when known, and those properties are not known to us so well by any other means, as by their invariable effects. What matter is, we know by our sight and feeling; what soul or spirit is, by our perception of its thinking in ourselves and others. By wishing, choosing, willing, and moving as we please, in consequence of thinking, we are still

farther enabled to distinguish soul or spirit from matter, wherein, after its utmost rarification, we never discover any one of these effects, nor any thing like them. It is true, there may be properties in matter, or impressed on matter *per se*, whereof we know nothing, nor can know. But from that which is unknown, and utterly unknowable, it is most idle to infer any thing. Men, in regard to property, character, health, or life, that is, in regard to any thing they value, admit not of arguments, founded on mere reveries and suppositions, and those too the most improbable in the nature of things. From all we know of matter, there is no one proposition more absolutely certain to human understanding, than this, that matter, *per se*, cannot think, will, nor choose. But why, saith a great philosopher, may not God endow matter with a power of thinking, &c.? That he hath not so endowed it, is as clearly evident, as any other negative concerning the nature of things. He hath made matter indifferent, as to rest or motion. Therefore it cannot choose whether it shall do either; indeed can do neither, but as it is influenced by some cause or power extrinsical to itself. It can never act of itself, and therefore its grand advocate, the presbyterian minister, hath judiciously denied the possibility of moral, or any other sort of freedom in mankind, whom he considers as nothing better than purely material machines. If they are in no sense free, they can never be judged, nor rewarded as good men, or punished as wicked. If they are but material machines, they can have no degree of freedom, and never can act, but as they are acted upon. All men, in their senses, know what matter is, so far, I mean, as it is of use to them to know it, but no man farther. The philosophers indeed talk of it, as if they knew a great deal more, but talk very idly, as they do on all other subjects, a little beyond the verge of utility. Aristotle confesses, that he knows not what it is, how much it is, or what sort of thing it is. Thus he speaks of it, as a philosopher; though he and the meanest Athenian, perfectly well knew this or that quantity of it, what it was in its distinguishing properties, how great or small this or that parcel of it was, and what sort of a thing that parcel was. Our modern philosophers, Newton among the rest, have been bolder with it; but talked, all of them, such nonsense on the subject, on the substratum of its accidents, on the inherence of those accidents in the substratum, as reduces it as absolutely to nothing in earnest, as Berkeley does in ridicule. But, after their handling, if it can

think, it is well, and certainly, as a mere nonentity, it can do nothing else. If people of all sorts, especially philosophers, would talk on subjects only so far as they understand them, it would certainly save a great deal of trouble, and probably tend more to the advancement of science than will be readily believed. Cartesius stuffed infinite space so full of matter, as not to leave therein the smallest interstice. Newton very happily cleared so much of it as to leave convenient room for the solar system, wherein planets and comets have been carried round in excellent order ever since, by centrifugal and centripetal powers. But unhappily he afterward, relapses into matter, adopts an ether, subtile enough to penetrate gold and adamant almost as easily as a vacuum, and sets this at work to whirl the planets about in different planes, intersecting one another in different angles, without seeming to remember, that a fluid so exceedingly rare could not possibly lay hold of, or carry with it, such prodigious masses of matter, through which it could so freely pass, and without asking leave of the centrifugals and centripetals, in possession of his prior patent. How this may do among the stars, I know not, but it makes wild confusion in the heads of his implicit disciples. Perhaps this weakness of their master imboldens them to make free with the *vis inertiæ*, made by him essential to matter, so as to ascribe to it a locomotive power, a power of thinking and choosing, or of acting as if it could really think and choose. Many, were they to read this, would say, I do not understand Sir Isaac, and it is just as easy for me to reply, that I am not single in charging him as I have done; that thousands, even philosophers, understand him no better than I do; and that his admirers are too slavishly addicted to all he says, howsoever contradictory, to recall the dictates of a master, held infallible, to the test of common sense. If the vast capacity of Newton was no better able to guide him through the mazes of matter, let the minuter tribe of philosophers take care how they launch out beyond him into an opinion, that matter, howsoever modified, may have a faculty of thinking. They pretend to say, that electrical fire is instantaneous, and quick enough for thought. Now, not to insist, as may be reasonably done, that thought requires a great deal more than quickness to produce it, I deny that the electrical vapour moves faster than the light of the sun, which requires seven minutes to arrive at this world; whereas I, without being a philosopher, can in a single instant outstrip the light, and think of a star a million times

farther off, than the most distant twinkler ever seen by Newton or Halley. But the materialists urge, that, if it were not the body, or bodily organs, which think, how should it come to pass, that a violent blow on the head of a wise man should instantly turn him into a fool or madman? Or (kill him? Should be added), may it not be true, that the soul, while closely united to the body, cannot duly exercise its proper functions, but by the organical instrumentality of the brain, nerves, or animal spirits, insomuch, that as often as they are greatly disordered, its faculties, for the time, are proportionably thrown into confusion. An able musician, sitting at his harpsichord, does justice to the composition of a Corelli, a Purcel, or a Handel, until a rude fellow, with a club, dashed against the instrument, puts it extremely out of order. Does it follow that the musician is annihilated? Or that there neither was, nor is, any such person as a musician? Or that the harpsichord, of itself, performed the tune before it was shattered? None but the deaf, or one wholly destitute of a harmonic nerve, can draw such a consequence. What mere matter may be made to do, should, I think, be carefully distinguished from what she can of herself do, which will be found to be little, or absolutely nothing at all. Des Cartes, her greatest votary, filled infinite space with her. Newton fairly confined her to a small part of it, I mean, at first, and, for some time, seemed to do her more justice than the Frenchman, who had enlarged her into a sort of goddess; and, in favour of her, degraded into mere clockwork Montaigne's cat, and Agrippa's dog, though honoured by some with the high title of a devil; and yet, after returning to her with a grand train of attractions, operating at small distances, he charged her with such repulsions at a greater, and so great a degree of subtility, that, with all those powers of thinking, ascribed to her by some, she knew not what to do, whether to go backward or forward, indeed, whether she had so much as a being or not. He kept her busy in a proximity of attractions, then in distant repulsions; and nevertheless, without so much as letting her know, how long, and how far she might continue to repel, hooked her to the sun by a chain long enough to reach her beyond the orbit of Saturn. Forced into this fickleness of conduct by her great prime minister, her gravity, long celebrated, was brought into shrewd suspicion. In this distress she hath been induced to represent her case to the French philosophers of the present time by a memorial, nearly to the following purport, Humbly shewing,

"That Lady Matter, your memorialist, hath been miserably mauled by a number of her pretenders, particularly by one, calling himself Newton, who seemed to be almost as much her admirer as Des Cartes himself, and to whom she was ever fond of displaying her highest attractions, and even secrets concealed from the rest; that this deceiver, though still closely following her, hath really jilted your memorialist, and fallen in love with a light sort of minx, known by the name of Inanity Vacuum; that, not satisfied with this gross affront, he hath aspersed your memorialist by the title or attribute of *vis inertiæ*, as if she were no better than a mere passive lump; that, as a consequence to this most abusive scurrility, he hath, in the opinion of his followers, stripped her of cogitation in its lowest degree, as a poor unthinking creature; and finally, that through the encouragement given by him, and other dabblers, in ideas, one Berkeley hath published a libel against her, wherein he attempts to destroy the opinion of her very existence. Now, gentlemen, as you are all satisfied, that there is no other being but herself,—who can think, will, or act; to you she flies for protection against the aforesaid breaches of privilege and outrages. Give her leave to hope, that you the most lively and frisky people in the world, and who exhibit in your persons such an experimental demonstration of the active powers she possesses, will no longer suffer the poor Britons to be superstitiously haunted by a belief in spirits, but will be pleased to dictate to them the fashion of materialism. There is no people on earth more addicted to fashion than they; and though they pretend to hate you, they do nothing but mimic you in every thing; insomuch, that an English, Scotch, or Irish man, not Frenchified, is by themselves deemed fit only for the canaille. Make them sensible, that if they set up for souls, their priests may happen to damn them, in case they should catch them at a short turn towards a bawdy-house, or a gaming-table; and that materialism may serve them perfectly well for Arianism, Scepticism, Deism, and other their systems of freedom, ecclesiastical or civil, which, for a long time, they have been at so much trouble to maintain. This summary opinion, without stopping short, or going farther, will at once do every thing for them they wish. It is soul only that enslaves and plagues them. You that have done so much for their colonies, do something now for themselves. Be assured, this one masterly stroke, without costing you a single livre, will soon bring them under your yoke. Fighting, you may perceive, after a trial of seven centuries, will

never do; you ought to know by this time, that the English obstinacy will hardly ever yield to force; but that, of all people, they are the most easily cajoled. It is but a few years ago since almost all the fine ladies in the British isles, and not a few of the nobles and gentry of the other sex, were ambitious to wear the livery of a French harlot, and were far from taking it ill to be told, that they wished to be like her in every respect. If a very handsome kind of cap were invented at Paris, and worn at Versailles, as a signal of proof, that the wearer believed there was neither a God in heaven, nor a soul in any human creature, all the British ladies would wear it, and allow their lovers and husbands to construe the mode as they pleased." Not to let this fine lady, now she pretends to the faculty of thinking, talk on eternally, our inquiry must draw a little closer to her pretensions. If angels and men are but matter, then angels and men, if agents at all, can be but necessary agents; there can be neither virtue nor vice in the universe; no good, no evil action was ever done, or possibly could be done; no one can be rewarded or punished for what he was compelled to do by a necessity of his nature, and by the power of extrinsical causes and motives operating upon him. How absurd would it be to suppose, that either angel or man should ever be made happy or miserable, in consequence of actions which he had neither power nor liberty to avoid? So, however it happens, virtue and happiness, on the one side, and sin and misery on the other, are inseparably united, in every intelligent being, in angels and men. Angels and men therefore are morally free agents, and as such, must have somewhat in them above matter, which can neither act, nor freely act. To deny the truth of this doctrine, is to deny the being, or at least justice, of a Creator. Here comes out a point absolutely demonstrated, that the materialist neither is or can be any thing better than a gross Atheist. Lest the Atheist should here urge, that I beg the principle of connexion between virtue and happiness, and between sin and misery, by referring to a future judgment, not yet demonstrated to him, I deny the fact. I appeal only to the present life for both connexions, and insist they are made evident even here, not only by all the laws of man, but by the general course of things, to say nothing of self-approbation, or remorse, on which two subjects I dare not appeal to the breast of any Atheist, though I do to that of all other men. It is readily confessed, that the god of this world, as he is styled by the apostle, is now and then permitted to raise his servants to

wealth and power by various vices; and to persecute, even to poverty and death, the best of men for their virtues. This, however, is but now and then; in general it is otherwise. Yet, is wealth or power in this world, happiness? Or is poverty and death, misery? Certainly not, unless conscience hath been fast asleep all the time, and unless the Atheist can demonstrate, there can be no judgment to come, no life after this. If matter can think, will, and choose, it must be on the strength of some qualities and powers, very opposite to all those in it wherewith we are acquainted, and not only utterly unknown to us, but absolutely unknowable. To say, there may be in matter such qualities and powers, for aught we know, and to infer from thence, that, in fact, it does think, is saying just nothing. Such conclusions, if admissible in Bedlam, can pass on mankind nowhere else. Its incapacity of moving itself, which we know, in any manner that hath the least appearance of design, or reason, wholly precludes the supposition of such qualities or powers. But matter, in some instances, as of light and electricity, is so attenuated, and moves with a rapidity so equal to that of thought, that its capacity of thinking may from thence be well enough supposed. We must be allowed here to insist, that it never moves at all, but is only moved; and even so, never is moved with a rapidity equal to that of thought, if thought must be called a motion, which I flatly deny. Between thought and motion there is not so much as a bare analogy, but only as the former may be a cause of the latter. The thought of a man lying motionless in his bed, ranges in one moment beyond the fixed stars, whereas light is too sluggish to do the same perhaps in less than half an hour; for it takes seven minutes to come hither from the sun, which, in comparison, is but from next door. Query, Whether the man can be said to know what thought is, who takes it for the same as motion, or imagines that mere motion may, at any time, produce it, any otherwise than as it may, by accident, furnish an occasion of thinking to somewhat of a very different nature from matter? It is true, fire and fermentation seem to shew, that matter is sometimes so circumstanced, as to produce motion in and of itself. Were it so (which is a fact too disputable to reason from), what is this motion to thinking? Does the exploding gunpowder, or the fermenting ale, discover any signs of thought, or a greater aptitude to thinking, than a mere stone or block? But the nerves may be so finely spun, and the animal spirits so attenuated, as to think. To think! we wait to see it

proved. They may indeed become fitter instruments for soul to work with, than cables, or iron in fusion. But by what arguments is their capacity of thinking supported? They are easily moved; but do they move themselves? Or is motion and thinking the same thing? If they are, the ball, moving from the mouth of a cannon, thinks; and, as it moves with greater force, is a superior thinker. The philosopher, not content to think with people of common sense, sets himself to investigate the entire nature of soul and matter; thinks rationally enough for a step or two; but, pushing himself and his subjects into the dark corner of a deeper inquiry, where he hath neither *datum* nor experiment to work on, is quickly involved in confusion and nonsense; yet his vanity still predominating, comes forth with a system, wherein soul is annihilated, and matter set up as a thinker. To support this, appearances are to be sought for, which art and sophistry are to thicken into a sort of solidity. As he leaves nothing in the universe, but matter, he hath abundance of dust to throw, which sticks wherever vice hath predisposed the eye to receive it. If he was not quite a fool when he began his inquiry, he comes out at the end on't so absolute a fool, as not to have sense enough left to perceive it; no, his cunning (for he is now a knave too) keeps him in countenance; and his proselytes, who greatly wanted the benefit of deception, cry him up as a genius, superior to Newton. If any thing however could possibly prove, that a man may be no better than a mere machine, the exhibition of this (what shall I call him?) would be the shrewdest argument to prove the inutility of a soul. Inquiries about religion, and every thing else, when pushed beyond the verge of human capacity, leave the mind in such a wilderness of probabilities, improbabilities, appearances, uncertainties, that the inquirer can with no safety fix on any thing. Neither man, nor any other created being, can, by his own efforts, arrive at a perfect, or even competent knowledge of himself. Our Maker alone knows us. All arguments against the being of our souls can result in nothing but the denial of a Maker; that is, in Atheism, as they did of old, and are now doing again. It is no wonder, if I cannot tell how I bend my finger, that I should not be able, by the mere light of my nature, to tell how my soul and body are connected; nor, to the satisfaction of a wilful infidel, demonstrate the necessity in me of somewhat, wholly different from, and superior to matter, in order to account for thought, choice, and action, in myself. Let nature say what she will (and, indeed, a

great deal she does say), much is still left for God to say by revelation, to put the being of a soul beyond all doubt; and so much He hath said, with such proofs of his saying it, as leave no room for doubt in a mind that will attend to them. As a man, with the helps that have been afforded him, may know enough of his mental faculties, of his passions, appetites, and affections in a state of natural corruption, and of the trinity of natures, a perfect vegetable, a perfect animal, and yet imperfect angel, which constitute his composition; so, if he sets himself philosophically to pry into either the spirit or matter, whereof he consists, a sort of knowledge, no way requisite to his happiness, he finds himself so lost and bewildered, that at one time he may think he hath no body, and at another that he hath no soul. As his eye cannot be an instrument of light to itself, but by rebound and reflection, so a man must look abroad to know himself. His Maker alone can teach him this knowledge; and does it, but so only as not greatly to encourage his itch of speculation, but rather so as to form him for the government of a superior being, which his dependent nature renders necessary to his happiness. Having said so much of our bodies, I purpose, presently, after dismissing the subject of matter, to say somewhat of our souls. To return however to common sense, which the philosopher ought to respect, and to the light of nature, which he idolizes, at least in himself, I insist, matter can only perform the office of an instrument in sensation, where its power in the human make is confessedly greatest. The eye, considered as an eye only, cannot see. The finger, considered only as a finger, can by no means feel. Yet seeing and feeling are thinking. But, if the eye and finger are able to think, they have still a great deal more to do. It is wonderful that Locke should so much as intimate a possibility in matter to think, after dwelling so copiously as he does, on reflex acts of the mind, and ideas of reflection. The eye, as an instrument of light, or give it what higher power we will, can by no means see that it sees, nor the finger feel that it feels. *Per se* they can neither see nor feel, much less can the former perceive that it sees, nor the latter that it feels. These acts are confessedly performed by somewhat more inward. Were it otherwise, the eye of a man newly dead, or of an ox, prepared for the camera obscura, might still see, for they still refract the light to the retina. The finger of a man too, chopped off from his hand, might feel the floor on which it is thrown. But that inward somewhat, which sees and feels through

these organs, knows that it sees and feels; and, in more exalted objects of thought, understands that it understands; is conscious of its own power and capacity. The materialist asserts, that a mass of clay, properly organized, may do all this. Organized by whom, or what? Why, by the Creator. Is there a Creator then? If there is, what need of organization? Is the Creator any thing better himself than matter? If he is a spirit, why might he not have created souls, as well as bodies? For my own part, who know Him to be infinitely wise by what He hath made, there is nothing so repugnant to my understanding, as to think Him only a mass of matter. There is, most certainly, something else of a different and higher nature in Him. As in God there is a Trinity of Persons, or somewhat analogous to persons, so there is in every human being a trinity of natures. Possibly this may be one reason, why man is said to be formed in the image of God. Sure I am at least, that this infinitely distant similitude in us to the Divine Being aids, in some measure, our conception of Him, and in a still greater degree, our faith in the work of salvation, as carried on by the concurrence of the Three Divine Persons, which, not conceived, leaves that work unintelligible. Man is as truly a vegetable, as any herb or tree; is fed from the earth, grows in size, blooms, bears fruit in maturity, good or bad, according to the nature and culture of the tree; declines, and rots in the same manner with other vegetables. Man is as truly an animal as a horse or sheep, moves this way and that way as appetite calls, and hath an animal soul, added to his vegetable nature, an immaterial soul, which thinks, feels, sees, and exercises its other senses, as a brute does. The Cartesians, having condemned the brute creation to the order of mere machines, have given occasion to others to sink the human species into the same rank.—Locke nibbles at the same opinion, as to man, but does not, that I remember, expressly so far degrade the brutes. Yet his denying them the faculty of forming abstract ideas, assigning this as the great difference between men and them, carries with it a pretty clear indication of his opinion in that particular. Yet brutes distinguish the several species of animals, and often of plants, from one another. A dog evidently forms a general or specific idea of mankind. He immediately welcomes the stranger who visits his feeder with a nose presented on his knee, and a wagging tail, not less valuable than a flattering tongue. To me he seems to form, in this mode of address, two abstracted

ideas, one of a man; and another, more refined, of a gentleman friendly to his feeder and master. But as he barks at a beggar, one may easily guess where he had his education, and what sort of company he kept. Philosophers, so apt to degrade the mere animal world, ought better to remember the beaver, the bee, the ant, the formicaleo, and the liverymen or Ariadne caterpillar, as I may justly call it. It is evident, that in them there is more than matter, call it by what name we will. I call it a soul. Let it be remembered here, that I do not say, the soul of a brute is intended for immortality. Of this matter I say nothing, because I know nothing. To the vegetable and animal nature in man there is, in some degree, superadded the nature of an angel, that is, a soul endued with intellect, and moral freedom, capable of knowing God, and of being happy for ever. Here is what I call a trinity of natures in one person; a spirit, soul, and body in one man. Thus it is that St. Paul expresses this union of nature in a prayer, put up for his Thessalonian disciples, that in them all three might be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. When man was to be created, 'God said, Let us make man in our image;' that is, as I understand it, let us, who are Three Persons, and yet one being or essence, make an image, one image of us, both as three and one, by uniting three natures in his single person. Now, as to the spirit and soul in man, common sense and common reason know sufficiently how to distinguish and prove their existence by their peculiar effects, thought, volition, &c. not one of which matter or body is capable of. This is enough for all the intents and purposes of human conduct and happiness. But if man, stirred up by his vanity, attempt philosophically to look farther into the nature of spirit and matter, or of his own existence, of motion, space, duration, substance, quality, or indeed of any thing else, than his own occasions require the use of, he employs his bounded faculties to a purpose, for which they were not lent him, and to which they are wholly inadequate. Supposing there is nothing in him but matter, how was it possible for him to form ideas, which could not have been received by his senses, nor have had any the smallest dependence on matter, howsoever organized, as of God, existence, substance, volition? When he fairly considers this, his confusion still increases, and leaves him under the difficulty at least of arguing from properties of matter, wholly unknown to him. Can matter form general ideas and propositions? Can it from thence draw

particular conclusions through a long concatenation of arguments, especially on subjects not perceivable by sensation? Is there nothing in logic or mathematics, that may not baffle its pretensions to the highest attainments of science? Here, if he is not a philosophical fool (and many such there are), he finds himself in the dark, finds all these subjects of inquiry vanishing into clouds of uncertainty, or perhaps, in his apprehensions, into nothing. Hence scepticism, the very madness of philosophy, or the more sober necessity of belief or disbelief, of all things the most despised by him, for the dissipation of his unsurmountable doubts. Out of this bedlam he never can be delivered, but by a return to common sense, and the humility of thinking, speaking, and acting, like other people. If, after coming a little to himself, he insists, we cannot account for the operation of spirit on matter, which we confess, he gives us a right to ask him how it is that matter can think, will, and choose, which to him is impossible to be answered. For him to say that matter can think (at least one of the greatest improbabilities) when he neither knows, nor, can possibly know, how; and to argue with us upon a principle, so utterly unknown, is to presume on our want of common sense, and on his own sophistical powers in palming the grossest nonsense on us for philosophy. The ancient Greeks, in all probability, with some idea of a resurrection, having given the same name of Psyche to the soul, and to the butterfly, whereby they did more justice to themselves and to human nature, than is done by our modern philosophers; the emperor Adrian, apprized of the double meaning, conveyed by this name, thus accosts his departing soul:—

Animula, vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quœ nunc abibis in loca,
Pallida, rigida, nudula?
Nec (ut soles) dabis joca.

Thus imitated in English:

Sweet little Psyche, late so gay,
So fond of flutter and of play,
Ah! whither, whither now away?

Why shiver thus, and look aghast?—
It is because the summer's past,
And all around thee cools so fast.

To what new region dost thou fly,
Where yet a warmer sun on high
May beam on thee thro' purer sky?

Apuleius forms a beautiful novel on one, at least, of the meanings conveyed by the word Psyche, but, I think, on both. I may

be laughed at for it, but I must declare it to be my opinion, that there is in the worm, and afterward in the lovely fly, a soul. What else could have directed the worm, when grown to its full size, to lay itself up in a place of safety, as if it foresaw its glorious change? I farther ask, as our resurrection seems to many an event so credible, why did the Creator in this, and millions of other instances, exhibit to our eyes an experimental proof of a similar reviviscence, one day, to take place in ourselves? Is a resurrection provided for a worm, and denied to a man? Is a man but a machine, when a worm or fly is animated by a soul? *Credit Judæus Appella.* Having said it before to the public, I will repeat it, to the philosopher, that believing and disbelieving is but one and the same operation of the mind, for we only assent to a credible proposition, because we believe it to be true, or dissent, only because we believe it to be false. In matters, too deep for the understanding of a philosopher, that is in every thing, pursued beyond his powers of investigation, since he must take up with faith, or absolute ignorance, would it not be happy for him to believe, that there is in him an immortal soul, which may be, must be eternally happy or miserable, and consequently to set himself, under the guidance of Christ, to the culture and improvement of this exalted principle within him? Since, as a philosopher, he must be here at best but a believer, ought he not to exchange philosophy for religion, whereby the most glorious prospects are laid open to his ambition and so realized to his inquiries and wishes, that he can be no longer bewildered or deceived? Here is no groping, no creeping, no whiffling, as in all his former researches; but somewhat of infinite beauty to engage the affections, and of dignity to fill up the capacities of his soul. Does he wish to discover the deep and hidden nature of things? Let him go to the school of Christ, where he will be taught to know God and himself, and to rise into that elevated condition, wherein the philosophy of one moment shall carry him farther, as to the nature of other things, than all the philosophy, from Aristotle down to this day, could carry the genius of Newton on the stretch, in a life of fourscore years. Christ hath more than once averred the being of a soul in man, and by the wisdom of his doctrines, as well as by his power of controlling nature, manifested in innumerable miracles, hath shewn, that he knew all nature, and might have taught us natural philosophy in perfection, had he not come to teach us somewhat, in comparison with which, that philosophy is but childish trifling. To me, and every

Christian it is absolutely certain, that man was made by Christ, and that he perfectly knew what is in man. To us all it is equally certain, that he came into the world to bring life and immortality to light by his gospel, that is, to full and clear light, for in a kind of twilight they were seen before his coming. This was the primary end of his coming, whereupon, as a foundation, all the other great ends and purposes were erected. The Sadducees, who adhered to the Mosaic law, maintained, there was neither angel, soul, nor spirit, in the universe. To them our Saviour therefore quotes the law, not the prophets, and says, that ' God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,' but ' not the God of the dead, but of the living.' If these patriarchs had, to that day, survived their own deaths, the inference is, that all men shall. To his wisdom, who spoke as never man spake, and to the manifestation of such power in the farther support of his mission, as none but God could exercise, we yield an assent, not to be withheld by common sense, rather than to the preachers of Atheism and wickedness, destitute of every thing that looks like a proof of their infamous principles. Here the true Christian takes up his rest and erects his standard. Instead of being terrified, like the infidel, with the belief of having an immortal soul to account for its thoughts, words, and actions, into the dreadful fate of perishing for ever; he rejoices, that he is to exist to all eternity, whether heaven or hell is to be his fate. He does what he can to escape from the one, and to obtain the other; and depends on the Spirit of God to do the rest for him. He cheerfully hopes in the mercy of his heavenly Father, and the merits of his divine Redeemer, that all will be well with him, though he were to pass through a thousand deaths, and to enter into a thousand different worlds. He believes, he repents, he does good; and if he is called to suffer in the cause of God, look at him flaming, in the fire of persecution, and hear him crying out, Rapture, rapture; and then prove, if you can, you great philosopher, that he is but a lump of clay. Try him fairly on the footing of wisdom and courage. Are your martyrs of ambition, who die for a name, as wise? Are your martyrs of wealth, who sacrifice their lives for the bits of gold they cannot keep, as brave? No, they are fools and cowards to him. He dies for Christ who had first given his blood for him. Can mere matter be so grateful? so sublimely grateful? Of all that was material in him there is nothing left but burnt bones and ashes; and is there nothing saved for his

great benefactor? You see him grow red, and then white, in the crucible of persecution; and is nothing at bottom for the heavenly chymist? Is God more tender of his caterpillar than his martyr? If faith is, as some think, the more meritorious for being slenderly founded, then the faith of the materialist is the most highly enthusiastic. However, the devil hath never been without his own species of fanatics. As among Christians the spiritual hath always been deemed the worst sort of pride; so among infidels the pride of materialists is unquestionably the worst sort of pride, as it is impossible, our good bishop and presbyterian minister could think they were improving the piety and virtue of their proselytes by convincing them they had no souls. Well, but they will insist, it was the love of truth that made them write as they did on the subject of matter. Truth! Are we to expect truth from men, who live by Christ and by his religion, and nevertheless give the lie to Christ in one of the most fundamental articles of his religion? If we can believe this, we, with it, may throw the whole of materialism and atheism into our creed. Having huddled together the foregoing thoughts on the portentous subject of materialism, and ascribed its rise and progress to an inveterate corruption of heart, and equal depravity of mind, it occurred to me, that a gross abuse of certain words might have considerably helped to betray the materialist into this shocking opinion. If our senses are not the only, they are at least the primary, inlets to all our ideas. Hence it is, that when we speak or write of that within us, which thinks, &c. we naturally draw its names, and the terms whereby we express to one another its various operations, from sensible names and terms, and a supposed similitude be tween them and the properties and operations of bodies; for instance, ruah, animus, spiritus, understanding, capacity, extent, force, power, and the like, all translated from body to soul, merely by metaphor. Pursuant to this borrowed mode of expression, it appears to me, that the materialists, taking these names and terms as immediately proper to, and significant of, soul, its faculties and operations, whereas in this view of them they are but purely figurative, and so were at first intended, have considered the soul, &c. to be merely material. Should this have been the case, it follows, that materialism is no other than an Epicurean transubstantiation, which sound reason and common sense ought totally to reject in philosophy, as they do in the idolatrous superstition of the church of Rome, which, for an evidently figurative, have forced a

literal construction on the words of our Saviour, absolutely in its final result, destructive of all Christianity. Thus it may be, that the enemies of truth have found in the language of religion, both in and out of Scripture, a stumbling block, thrown before their own obliquity of interpretation. A most ingenious French author will have it, that the idolatry of the Egyptians originated from their hieroglyphic letters or characters, which, in process of time, they erected into so many deities, mystically to be adored, at least by those who could not read. But our materialists, taking the symbolical expressions, just now mentioned by me, for literal and proper, have deduced from thence the happy thought, that possibly there may be no other existence, but that of matter, no other soul, no other God. If this is a rational deduction, or (supposing it undeduced) a rational proposition, I must needs say, that matter is grown a very stupid and lubberly deity in comparison of what she was, when she danced into so many suns, planets, comets, and such a world of beautiful and glorious productions, which infinite wisdom, goodness, and power need not be ashamed of. How shockingly poor is the genius of our materialists, who, instead of aiming at originality, take up with the thread-bare, and long ago exploded opinions of Epicureans and Sadducees, to erect a character of philosophy! The absolute and total ignorance of all truth, as vended by a Scotchman, though an antiquated absurdity also, is more modest, and better suited to the narrow and fallible capacity of man, than this, that a man is but a loom or clock, and not at all accountable for his goings. On the whole, if we are but mere machines, and as a necessary consequence to this, we are only involuntary agents, or rather, no agents at all, there is an end of all morality, that is of moral freedom, of all distinction between virtue and vice; all religion, and all laws of God and man, are repealed; rewards and punishments are excluded; and the attributes of justice and mercy in God are absolutely denied. If matter can think, nay, must think, in this manner, as its most strenuous advocate maintains, it were as well if it could not think at all, as to take up with such a self-exploding jumble of Epicurean chances, and stoical fatalism. On the footing of this philosophical theology, the two aforesaid attributes of justice and mercy can be no longer called relative attributes, as having no object to be related to, nothing to exercise themselves upon. Nay, the deity of a materialist can be nothing else but matter, can have no attributes but length, breadth, and thickness; may

be measured, as the old gods of wood and stone, by a two-foot rule, or a line. If his god is any thing better than those, how came he to make such machines as were exceedingly liable to pain and misery, for only doing what we must do? For only doing what he made and set us up to do? Righteousness, or wickedness, can never, in any intelligible sense, be ascribed to mere machines, no more than to clocks or watches. To say, a virtuous clock, or a vicious watch, would be a perversion of language, utterly abhorred by common sense. But having thus mentioned a clock, I will take the liberty, like an old man as I am, to tell a curious story of a clock, somewhat inferior, I confess, to the artificial hawk of a German, that flew out from Vienna, met the emperor, turned about, and flew into the city again with the other attendants; and why not, if they were but machines as well as it? A clock-maker in a country-town of this kingdom attempted, some years ago, to shew what matter may still be brought to do. He made, in short, a speaking clock, which not only struck the hours, like an inanimate preacher in the pulpit, but articulated four or five of the first words in the Lord's prayer. One of our judges, going through that town, was not led by devotion to church, but went to pray with the clock, and having heard it, cried out to the attending lawyers, Most admirable invention! And turning to the ingenious artisan, said, Go on, friend, and teach your clock to pronounce the whole liturgy; and then farewell parsons! Every parish may be furnished with a clock, and a quart of oil by the year; it will not stand us in much more than prime cost. What a saving! Prime cost! Prime cost! If this invention is carried forward, as the good judge advised, and watches, of like construction, are once contrived, numbers of both machines may be sent to a certain bishop for ordination. The clocks will make tall priests; and the watches, dapper deacons, very convenient for chaplains to our fine ladies. A Rev. or Right Rev. clock will be a curious object for a materialist to laugh at!

23. Sitting one evening with a very learned and religious lay-gentleman, the vicar of his parish, a Mr. C. came in. The gentleman asked me, how many books, I thought, Mr. C. had in his library? Hard to guess, sir; But guess. Well, two hundred. No, sir, but one. Now guess what that one is. What? Out of all the books in the world? Consider, he is a parson. Well then, the Bible. No, no, a volume of comedies; and that which frightens me most is, that they are the worst comedies, ever

printed. Now, sir, what condition, do you think, we of this populous parish are in, when we depend for our eternal salvation on one volume of comedies, which have been all damned themselves already?

24. There are few things more grossly mistaken among us, than the idea and nature of hospitality. That which comes so strongly recommended to us from the times of the patriarchs, Homer, &c. and is still equally the dictate and duty of humanity in the East, and wherever there are no inns, nor caravanseras, is the entertainment of strangers and travellers. This, with sheltering and feeding the poor, is evidently the sole hospitality of the New Testament also. When the rich gorge the rich with sumptuous meals, and intoxicate one another with large quantities of wine, the practice is an enormous vice, and productive of so many other horrible vices, that we cannot conceive another, more directly opposite to Christianity, nor a species of orgies more literally celebrated to the devil. Good fellowship and friendship are however pleaded as its apology, after all the quarrels and duels, wherewith it is so often attended. But the sordid vail-tax laid on it by the grudging entertainer, hath not been so well observed by any one, as by the unknown author of the following stanza.

Who e'er hath travell'd life's dull round,
And try'd its hospitable grin,
May sighing say, he always found
His warmest welcome at an inn.

It is with horror that I throw these thoughts on paper, because they remind me of Admiral Warren, and his untimely death. This greatest and best man perhaps, ever produced by Ireland, coming home to his native country, after a long absence, which he had crowded with piety, love to his country, and exploits of the highest eclat, was in a week or two, feasted to death by his Irish admirers in Dublin. He could with undaunted bravery fight the enemies of his country, but could not resist the importunities of his friends, as they called themselves, who hugged to death the unwearied solicitor of their interests, and gloried in thicker skulls, than that of an admiral, often offered to the cannon of the French, who would have used him with more humanity had he fallen a prisoner into their hands. If we deduct their vanity in parading twenty or thirty dishes, and as many bottles to Warren, and their parading Warren as their guest to the town, from their hospitality; and reckon up what he paid in vails for every entertainment; we shall

find too little even of mistaken kindness left, to compensate for the death of a good dog. And yet thus fell a sacrifice to his own redundant goodness of nature, and their senseless pride, the honour of his country, and the ornament of the age he lived in. Warren! great Warren! Thus to perish among a set of insignificants, who knew nothing higher, than to eat, and drink! who existed only for the table, and the close-stool!

25. We hear every day abundance of talk about reformation, both civil and ecclesiastical; and God knows, no age nor country ever wanted it more, in either respect. But who are they that call for it? A party. And who are they that oppose it? A party. The 'outs' would be in; and the 'ins' would stay where they are. But as to a real reformation, a change from dissipation and vice to piety and true patriotism, it is not thought of, nor indeed so much as named, but for show. Of all things, a real reformation is precisely that which we can least bear. We cry aloud for liberty; and so does the cut-throat and murderer in irons. For what purpose do we pant after more of it than we have? Let the conscience, if he hath any, of the cheat, the sharper, the oppressor, &c. answer the question. The only instrument of reformation, public or private, is religion; but we have none. So far as an individual may contribute to his own reformation, it must be owing to somewhat in himself, able to combat and conquer that in him, which he wished to suppress. The same is as true of a community, consisting as it must do, of individuals. But with whom is this internal principle found? Is it found in a large majority of us? Or found so warm, as to encourage the faintest hope of amendment? There is, I fear, nothing in the world we dread so much as a reformation. We mean indeed to reform others, so far as to render them subservient to our own wishes. But as to reforming ourselves, nothing can effect it, but a calamity, which may exterminate one-half of us, and beggar the other. Considered as a body of people, we are in the condition of an ugly old woman, wishing to be young and handsome; but what must the strength and rough handling be, that can force her into the mill? and how will she creak and squall, when it begins to grind!

26. The wisdom of Providence must have dealt with man in one manner, during his state of innocence, and in another under that of his corruption. Indulgence was suitable to the former, and correction, to the latter. While we continued in our duty,

paradise itself was not thought too good for us; but when we fell from faith and obedience, a barren and rugged world, with thorns, thistles and labour, became our appointed portion. How infinitely good is God, whose very curses are blessings! It is true, it costs us some pains to extirpate the thistles, and other weeds, though every one of them medicinal. The thorns are sometimes more troublesome, though we have hardly a more beautiful shrub, nor any fence near so good. And as to labour, now that we are become wicked and unhealthy, what else is there that can so well turn away our thoughts from sin, or prevent our falling into sickness, as continual exercise?—Now that we have lost the natural and delightful entertainments, for which we were created, how miserably mopish should we grow, had we nothing to do? A foolish and haughty mortal, casting his purblind eyes on this scene of things, so diversified with labour and trouble, inquires with a saucy sort of wonder for the origin of evil, and can hardly be persuaded to see it within himself. There is no finding it without him. There is no natural evil in the world. Thorns, thistles, storms, earthquakes, volcanoes, plagues, are all good in themselves; and best, beyond comparison, when they fall on man in his present state of degeneracy, for what less could check the headlong tendency to wickedness in a guilty nation? As to wars, the Spirit of God, speaking by St. James, traces them to ourselves, and common experience fails not to do the same. Yet even wars between two nations is a blessing, inasmuch as they drain out of both a great number of idle and wicked young men, only fit to debauch the youth of each sex, if they were to stay at home; and lead them out to butcher one another—a useful species of political phlebotomy.—A more philosophical account of evil however is petulantly sought for in a round-about wilderness of weak reasonings, which ought to be, all of them, cut short in this easy theory, accommodated to the Author and nature of things. The suns, planets, worlds, the universe in short, had not been worth the making, had no intelligent beings, or morally free agents, been created. The creation of such necessarily implies the possibility of sin, and affords an open to virtue, which without that possibility, had been impossible. If, in order to exclude vice, none but necessary agents had been created, virtue too, with the exercise of divine justice and mercy, must have been for ever excluded from the creation, and God unknown for ever, but by himself; for intelligence and moral

freedom, at least in the present constitution of things, mutually infer each other. How easy is it to justify the ways of God, if we can but think without prejudice, and without the impious vanity of making our subject more intricate than it is in itself, in order to a display of our own talents. Had I not been often pestered with questions about the origin and permission of moral evil, and found so little sufficiently clear and succinct on those subjects in the elaborate treatises of authors, I should have thought it a degree of impiety to say even the little I have said on a fact, so notorious as the creation of morally free agents. If God hath peopled this world with beings of this character ; and if a number of such beings, abusing the freedom bestowed on them as the highest perfection of created natures, have gone to a worse place, how dare I presume to defend his justice in so doing ? Or rather how dare any one object to it ? He hath done it, and therefore it is right. Casuistry can go no farther.

27. Many good Christians, and even some eminent writers, affect to believe, that our friendships and attachments, formed in this world, will be protracted into, and make a part of, our happiness in a better. How low, and contrary to the mind of Christ, is this fond imagination! Do we ever consider the connexions we form with other children, ere any of us are two years old, of consequence enough to be carried up to the age of forty or fifty ? How much more trifling are those we form here in an advanced age, to such as await us in heaven, where there can be but one, namely with God, and all that is good, and that supported by infinite love, which can leave no room for lower and less ardent affections. It is true, we shall know one another, but only so as to be witnesses for or against one another, in justification of the sentence pronounced at the last day. Were the affections we feel here to be everlasting, they would be oftener an occasion of misery than happiness, inasmuch as possibly we might perceive, that a hundred of those we formerly loved, are excluded, for one that is admitted into the place we are in. God is the centre of all the happy, of all that we shall then be capable of loving; and, as to those that are shut out, we shall abhor them as enemies to God, and associates of the devil. This whimsical expectation is likewise contrary to the word of Christ. In reasoning with the Sadducees he founded his argument on an absolute denial of it in regard to man and wife, the closest and dearest of all our connexions in this life; and, *a fortiori*, on the like denial of all

subordinate attachments formed here. 'In the resurrection,' he tells us, 'we shall be as the angels in heaven.' The friendships of this world, howsoever pure and exalted, would be very unfit to be carried up so far, and could but produce detachments from that tendency of heart and soul to God, and that sacred love of all that are truly His, which are to swallow up all the powers of our nature. Of all other friendships formed here below, that between man and wife, for certain reasons, which I need not mention, are the least fit to be carried thither.

28. Cunning is nothing else but the fool's substiiute for wisdom. A poor shift indeed!

29. People, quoth dame Fashion, may rail at death if they will; but, upon my honour, mourning is a great advantage to poor gentlewomen. Here am I putting on these sables the fourth time; and after, with a little coaxing and mending, they may serve me a fifth turn, when my dear Jack shall leave me a widow. Jack is a very hard drinker, and drinks, I think, but the more for my scolding;—well, every body says I look handsomer in black than in colours. My blacks may therefore be of more use to me yet, than barely saving me a little money. Tongue, do thy office; and may my teeth bite my hand, if it attempt to hold thee.

30. It is a common excuse in illiterate people for their ignorance in religion, on being examined, that they are not what they call scholars, as if Christianity required any degree of learning in order to be understood, which it is so far from doing, that common sense is the best guide to the holy Scriptures, wherein it is found. That this is true, is made evident by the case of many persons, born blind, and of others, deaf, and consequently dumb, from infancy, who have imbibed all its necessary principles with full sufficiency. Blind William Carshore of Pettigo, hath almost the whole Scriptures by rote, and applies them to himself and others with as much propriety as any divine among us. John Burns of Monaghan also, without ever having been able to hear, or speak a single word, can read, write, keep accounts, and preached, when but a mere boy, several very striking sermons in dumb show.

31. The two genealogies of our Saviour's ancestors, given us in the first chapter of St. Matthew, and the third of Luke, from David to Christ, are so different, that our divines and commentators have been at a considerable loss to reconcile them. At this I am not a little surprised, since it is evident that, so far, they are quite different genealogies. The evangelists had them from the

public records in the temple, and by no means elsewhere, for any correction made by an evangelist, though ever so justifiable in itself, must have hurt the cause he wished to serve, as the scribes would not have failed to call such correction a falsification of an authentic registry, on which the course of inheritances, and the birth of the Messiah depended. St. Matthew traces the line of Joseph from David by Solomon, by Zorobabel, by Abiud, and Jacob. St. Luke traces the line of Mary from David by Nathan, Zorobabel, Rhesa, and Heli. These two lines coincide or osculate in Zorobabel, whether we take him for the grandson of Jechonias by nature, or of Neri by law, in either case by Salathiel. From hence they run separate, in Matthew, by Abiud; and in Luke, by Rhesa, the two sons of Zorobabel, until they coincide again in Jesus (if not sooner in Matthat or Matthan) the son of Mary by nature, and grandson of Heli, and by law, the supposed or imputative son of Joseph, as the husband of Mary. By the wrong placing of a parenthesis, Luke iii. 24, the evangelist is not commonly understood to set Jesus, as he certainly intended to do, for the son of Heli, his grandfather, for a woman could never make a part in a Jewish genealogy, and Christ, having no earthly father, must have been placed as the son of Heli, his immediate male progenitor; and his son, he was, at least as truly, as Adam is, in the same genealogy, called the Son of God. Whatsoever cavils may be raised by an ignorant comparison of these genealogies with each other, they were vouched by an authentic record, and both begin with David, and end with Jesus, in such a manner, as to prove the latter to be the descendant of the former, both by nature and law.* With what face however can the Jews object the discordance of genealogies, taken from their own registry, lost in the destruction of their temple, and no where authentically pursued through the ages subsequent to that event, insomuch, that there is not now on earth a man, who can prove himself to be a Jew, much less a descendant of David, in such a manner as they were obliged to do after their seventy years captivity in Babylon. What then comes of their expectation of a Messiah, undeducible from either Juda or David? I might have wire-drawn this matter to a much greater length; but concentration, in such cases, if I mistake not, is infinitely more satisfactory.

32. While Mary, the virgin mother of Christ, is idolatrously prayed to, and adored by a numerous church, monopolizing to it-

* N.B. See Yardly on the Genealogies of Christ.

self the titles of Christian and Catholic, her virtue is impiously called in question by Jews and infidels of all sorts, who have nothing else whereon to ground their calumny, but the evangelical history of her connexion with Joseph, and the birth of her Son. Now, such is the whole transaction, as there related, that her character, on the footing of that relation, is infinitely better vindicated and supported in the eye of reason and common sense, than it could possibly have been under any other supposable set of circumstances. After being espoused, but not yet married, to Joseph, she is found with child, for which reason he is resolved to part with her; in other words, not to marry her, nor have any thing farther to do with her. Nothing but an immediate revelation from God, that she was pregnant by miracle, and not by commerce with any man, could possibly have reversed that resolution, and determined him to marry her. This determination was still farther confirmed by the names, which an angel told him the child must bear, Emmanuel, that is, God with us, and Jesus, the Saviour of his people. At that very time, the Jews, on the strength of various prophecies, universally expected the Messiah ; and the child was no sooner born than he was adored by the eastern wise men, guided by a star to the house where he lay. Herod, then king of that country, but knowing himself to be a usurper, schemes the death of the child, marked by the prophecies as the rightful king, and as such saluted already by the wise men. To save him, Joseph is ordered by another revelation to carry his mother and him into Egypt, for this reason, because Herod, one of the most powerful princes of the age, and supported in his power by the Roman emperor, sought to kill the child. Joseph, however, at the peril of his own life, obeys, and returns not, till after the death of Herod; but finding Archelaus, the son of that tyrant, on the throne, to avoid him, he secretly took a compass in going to his own part of the country. I repeat it, that no circumstance of things, exclusive of divine interposition, can be conceived, or even supposed, to vouch, in any degree, so amply for the purity and virtue of any woman, as these do for those of the blessed Virgin. The extreme importance of the case required all this; and therefore all this was given by infinite wisdom and goodness. A pregnant woman, who had never known a man required high attestation, and such was afforded, as never was produced for the virtue and chastity of any woman in this world. Such also was produced for the resurrection of Christ, this case likewise, so much

above the course and power of nature, requiring it; but calumny, prompted by infidelity, is not to be satisfied with any evidence. No character ever had a more watchful guardian, than that of Mary in a husband, so thoroughly alarmed by her pregnancy before marriage, that nothing but miracle and divine revelation, repeated, could have induced him to marry her, and afterward to prefer the safety of her and her child to his own life. What but the divine foreknowledge could have predicted, before conception, that Mary and Elizabeth should each of them have a son, and not a daughter? or that their sons should prove to be persons of such extraordinary characters, and do so great things, when they were yet in their cradles, as is found in the prophecies of Zacharias, Simeon, and Anna, all so many additional reasons with Joseph for acting as he did? It will be in vain for the Jews and infidels to allege, that the evangelists might write what they pleased about persons so low in the world, and transactions done in a corner; for certain it is, that nothing was ever introduced into the world with a greater degree of notoriety than the birth of Christ and his precursor. The shepherds spread it every where, and the eastern wise men carried the alarm to Herod and his court; and two thousand innocents were slaughtered to come at the body of Christ, in the very country, and at the very time, foretold by the prophecies, for the advent of the Messiah, when and where every Jew was in high expectation of that event. Nay the alarm had, at that juncture, seized the whole Roman empire. Was there no notoriety in all this? or was Judea, and the Roman empire, but a corner? See what reasons, among many others, Joseph had for his faith in the virtue of Mary, and we have for ours!

Many passages of Scripture there are, which have been so miserably perverted by artful expositors, as to be vended among the unwary for proofs of the very opinions they were intended to prevent or refute. Others there are, the true sense whereof the commentators seem not to have reached at all, or to have touched, as it were, but with the point of a hair. Of these I shall note but a few here, and mean, God willing, to do the same by more, as they may happen to occur in my course of reading the New Testament, which I pursue daily in a regular manner.

33. Matth. v. 17. (Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law.) Our Saviour means by (law) in these words, not only, or so much the law by Moses, as that true and right rule of obedience, to which the Mosaic was but introductory; and by (ful-

filling) he means, carrying on to perfection that rule of obedience, which had been rather exemplified in outward ordinances, as a national law, than inwardly in holiness of heart. This outward obedience he fulfilled by bringing in everlasting righteousness among his followers, and in himself offering up the true and efficacious sacrifice, which had been but typified and shadowed by the sacrifices of beasts. For the former, he substituted the latter, in both respects.

34. Ibid. vii. 3. (Mote) here is put for καρφος which Athenæus uses for a splinter or twig, here opposed to a beam, which seems to sharpen and enliven the passage.

35. Ibid. ix. 16, 17. My disciples are poor men, who fare hardly at all times, and stand in little need of fasting. Besides, they have always lived under the influence of the old law, whereof fasting makes little or no part. As to your practices in this behalf, they are but traditionary, ostentatious, and new-fangled, not even intended by you as mortifications of the flesh. Now that I am present with them to govern their appetites, I will not patch up their worn principles with shreds of your unpurged and undressed cloth, nor pour your new fermenting wine into such old vessels, lest the ill effects should follow which I see among yourselves, and, in tenderness to them, shall not expose them to a danger of the like nature, I have espoused them to myself, and they shall rejoice for the short time of my abode with them; but when I leave them, they shall not only fast from meats and drinks, as you do, but from every other sort of pleasure, which you, when you please, indulge yourselves in with unbridled appetites. Then shall the iron hand of persecution from you, and the rest of this world, be let loose upon them; and then shall they fast indeed from every comfort of life, properly so called.

36. Ibid. xvi. 22. For (be it far from thee), the literal sense (well be it to thee, Lord) is to the same effect.

37. Ibid. xix. 24. (It is easier for a camel, &c.) Who then can be saved? said the disciples, for if all are not rich, all would be, which comes to very near the same thing. Our Saviour answers, with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. The salvation of any man is a miracle, for he is saved as by fire, and only as a new creature, which God alone can make. There is here therefore no hyperbole. A man must be made very little, at least in his own eyes, before he can enter in at the strait gate. Sin, but especially pride, swells him to the size of a camel; and

none but the Holy Spirit, can reduce him to the thickness of a thread.

38. Ibid. xxiii. 35. Commentators have been extremely puzzled about this Zecharias. He could not have been the son of Jehoiada, for this was the son of Barachias; neither was the son of Jehoiada the last of the prophets slain by the Jews for reproving their idolatry and wickedness, as our Saviour begins with Abel, and seems to enumerate all of that character, from first to last, even to the consummation of that judgment, wherewith he was, in this passage, threatening the apostate Jews. The person therefore pointed to here could, I think, be no other than that Zecharias, son of Barachias, whose death between the temple and the altar, inflicted for similar reproofs, Christ includes as the last, prophetically foreseen. Of this man by name, of his father also by name, and of his death, circumstantially described, as here referred to, Josephus makes mention in his Jewish war. The only objection to this interpretation lies in the word (εφονευσατε) which is translated (whom ye slew), whereas the death of this man was seven or eight and thirty years after the uttering of these words by our Saviour. This, to me, is no objection, for I insist that the Greek word just now repeated, being the first aorist, formed from the first future, points at the time to come, as well as the past, and should be translated (whom ye shall have slain), the same tense being thus, of necessity, translated in this evangelist, c. x. 23, (τελεσητε) shall have finished or gone through, in Luke xvii. 10, ye shall have done, for (ποιησητε), and in other places, not at present occurring to me. They are certainly but clumsy grammarians who give precisely the same time to this aorist which they give to the præter tense. The same may be justly said of those who give a precisely neuter sense to the second aorist, which, as well as the first, hath an indefinite or mixed sense in regard to time. In Luke, we translate the second aorist by the words (hath been or was destroyed) in speaking of the same Zecharias's death, which I apprehend should be, shall have been destroyed, before the general destruction of the Jews. It is true, this man is called by St. Matthew the son of Barachias, and by Josephus, the man I point to, is called the son of Baruch; but then Baruch and Barachias appear to be the same name, nearly in the letter, and precisely in the meaning, which is, one blessed, or kneeling. Zecharias, the son of Jehoiada, could hardly be the man intended by our Saviour, because the son of a dif-

ferent father, and by no means the last prophet, or righteous person massacred by the Jews for reproving their departure from God, and the true religion.

39. Ibid. xxvii. 3. (When he saw that he was condemned;) that is, in the determination of the Jews, and their interest with Pilate.

40. Ibid. xxiv. 28. (Eagles) ravenous birds, and the standards of the Roman armies, ready to devour a people reprobated and given up as a dead carcase, by Providence.

41. Ibid. xxvii. 9. The prophecy here quoted is found in Zechariah, not Jeremiah. If this simple misnomer is not a mere error of some ancient amanuensis, the quotation by St. Matthew must have made a part of Jeremiah in the time of our Evangelist. Some have thought, and not without grounds, that some part of the prophecy, ascribed to Zechariah, was taken from that of Jeremiah, which they ground on an idea of similitude in the style. It is certain, that the prophecy of the latter, in the several copies of it, as well while he lived, as after, underwent, as to its matter, several transpositions, in which some part of his work might have been given by mistake to Zechariah, when Judas Maccabæus was revising and collecting the Jewish canon of Scripture. It is also observable in the eleventh chapter of Zechariah, that the Babylonian captivity appears therein to be predicted, which could not have been by him, who survived the seventy years of that captivity. Be this however as it may, the matter of this extraordinary prophecy, or its credit as such, admits of no suspicion. The thirty pieces of silver, at which the Saviour of mankind was valued, and the potter's field, purchased with these pieces, stand so precisely specified in the prophecy, and in the transaction, four hundred years after, that, assign the prophecy to whom we will, no evidence of this sort, or indeed of any other sort, can be more satisfactory. St. Matthew cites the prophecy in the face of Jews and Christians, any one of whom might easily see, whether his citation was just or not; that is, whether he had cited a prophecy acknowledged on all hands to be genuine, whether as found in Jeremiah or Zechariah.

42. Mark ii. 17. (I came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.) Christ could not mean, that he did not come to call the righteous to a repentance of their righteousness, but that they needed no repentance, which he spoke ironically in regard to the hypocritical Pharisees, who called themselves the righteous,

for in reality, all men were included under sin, and stood in need of that repentance, which he came to inculcate the universal necessity of.

43. Ibid. xi. 13. It was not the season for figs, that is, for cultivated figs; why then did Christ look for figs on this tree? It was a wild fig-tree, that bore an ordinary kind of fruit at all seasons, was the property of no man, and grew, as a thorn among us, on the highway side. From such, fruit of an inferior kind might be expected; but on this none of any sort was found. The whole species, with this in particular, represents a numerous class of mankind, so that the transaction is beautifully parabolical.

44. Ibid. xii. 29. (Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord;) the one God is the one Lord, and the one Lord is the one God, both to Jews and Christians. Who is God save the Lord? Psal. xviii. 31. This is perfectly consistent with 1 Cor. viii. 6, where the Father is called the one God, and the Son the one Lord, not in contradistinction to each other, as is evident from the two texts just quoted, and from one hundred and twelve other passages of Scripture, wherein the Lord God is jointly mentioned as one only being; and Christ himself saith, my Father and I are one, one Being ἓν εσμεν.

45. Ibid. xiii. 32. In the beginning of this chapter our Saviour having foretold the destruction of the temple, was asked by four of his apostles, when that event should come to pass, and with what sign it should be accompanied? In regard to the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem, he gives them several signs, such as preserved the lives of all his disciples on that occasion; and then proceeds with a circumstantial prophecy of the melancholy event, prefiguring a still more dreadful prediction of a destruction, to come on the world, wherein the two predictions are sometimes so purposely intermixed, that it is not easy for us to perceive, when the one or the other is pointed out. But he adds, of the day and hour (not contained in the inquiry of the apostles) knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father; and this he saith, that they may be the more attentive to his warning, and to the necessity of being always on their guard. Take ye heed, watch, and pray, for ye know not when the time is. As to the very day and hour of either event, he speaks as a man, who had grown in wisdom and stature; as a man, who afterward prayed that the cup of death might pass from him; as a man, who in suffering death cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me; and as St. Paul said to

the Corinthians, when I came among you, I determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. We are not to conclude with the Nestorians, from Christ's sometimes speaking of himself as a man only, that his person may be divided into two, no more than we can suppose of any man, that he means to say, he hath two persons in him, when he speaks of his animal nature apart from his moral. Though in Christ the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, yet were there some things, not included in his commission as a teacher, as is most clearly explained by himself in his answer to another over-curious question of his apostles, Acts i. 6, Lord, wilt thou, at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? which he thus reproves; It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power; that is, reserved to himself, as his own paternal prerogative, to be adjusted to certain exigencies, and accommodated to such purposes by his Providences, as you cannot possibly be judges of.

46. Ibid. xv. 46. (To the door of the sepulchre) should be (upon the door); for the Greek preposition is επι, and the sepulchre was hollowed downward in the rock, and not carried forward into the face of it.

47. Luke i. 16, 17. And many of the children of Israel shall he, John Baptist, turn to the Lord their God, and he, John, shall go before him, the Lord their God, namely, Christ, in the spirit of Elias. In the same sense, Zecharias says to John, newly born, thou child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; ver. 76.

48. Ibid. vi. 1. (Second sabbath after the first) sounds oddly; but the seven sabbaths immediately succeeding the passover were all reckoned first sabbaths by the Jews, and this was the second of them.

49. Ibid. xii. 22. (Take no thought) here and in Matt. vi. should be (be not very anxious); for in the Greek it is μη μεριμνατε, which is derived of μεριμνα great or over-carefulness. It was not certainly our Saviour's intention, that his disciple should take no thought at all about the necessaries of life, for so he could not provide for himself or his family, and should therefore, in the judgment of the Holy Ghost, be worse than an infidel. I take the meaning to be, that when a Christian hath done what is needful, in order to make provision for food and raiment, as ploughing

and sowing his land, &c. he should not at all be solicitous about the success of his labour.

50. Ibid. xvi. 31. Moses and the prophets are not here maintained to be sufficient teachers of eternal rewards and punishments, but only as equal, or rather preferable to one rising from the dead; because, if Moses, &c. do not speak with perfect clearness of a future state, it may be as far from a clear point, and even farther, whether any apparition be that of our brother, or friend, and not an evil spirit in his likeness, and whether such apparition declare the truth or not; beside, Moses and the prophets lead directly to a belief in Christ, who was then come to reveal, in the clearest manner, the rewards and punishments of futurity.

51. Ibid. xvii. 10. When ye shall have done all things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants. We have done that which it was our duty to do. That which can bring no benefit to our divine Redeemer; that which we owed to our master for the price he paid when he purchased us, or for the maintenance and wages he covenanted to give us. Before we became servants to Christ, we were slaves sold under sin, for whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin; but now having learned the truth of Him, the truth hath made us free, and brought us by the redeeming blood of Christ into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. If then we do only what our master requires, which is all manner of good, and abstain from all manner of evil, we do but that which he purchased us to do; and cannot justly call ourselves useful or profitable servants, till we do more, and overpay him for his blood, a thing utterly impossible. Where then is room for boasting, or supererogation? None, but, on the contrary, pardon must be implored for infraerogation by the very best of us.

52. Ibid. xx. 37, 38. The argument of our blessed Saviour here urged, for the resurrection against the Sadducees, who at least pretended to venerate the Mosaic law, though not the prophets, appears at first sight conclusive only in part, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, might be still alive without the necessity of a resurrection to follow. But we no soon return to Acts xxiii. 8, than we clearly see the force of this argument, for there we are told, that the Sadducees did not believe in the being of either angel or spirit, and therefore disbelieved the resurrection. The argument having therefore overthrown their principles, their conclusion sinks of

course ; because, if the soul survives the body, it may as easily resume as lay it down. But that it is not the will of God that it should resume it, no Sadducee, Materialist, or Atheist, can ever render in the lowest degree probable, against the united voice of reason and revelation, against the bare supposition of justice and goodness in God. If nevertheless the law should seem to leave the proof of a resurrection at all doubtful to one made up of nothing but doubts, it should be considered, that the law was not given to establish the belief of a resurrection, a point left for the Saviour of mankind to put beyond all doubt by his doctrines, his miracles, and the amply attested experiment of his own rising again the third day after his death, according to his promise, though all the power of man was employed to prevent it.

53. St. Jerome tells us, that when the Ebionites and Cerinthians, in the life of St. John the apostle, endeavoured by various ways to refute or render disputable the divinity of our blessed Saviour, that apostle recounted to the then clergy of Asia some passages of his blessed Master's life and conversation, omitted by the other evangelists, whereby that divinity was placed beyond the reach of question or cavil. On hearing these, the clergy solicited him to give the church a fourth gospel, wherein might be authenticated and recorded the aforesaid important passages ; not that the other three evangelists had been silent on the subject, but because the authority of St. John was qualified to make it still a clearer point. His answer was, that he was then too old to undertake the work. However, being pressed by their entreaties, and by the urgent necessity of the business, he desired them to fast and pray for the divine assistance requisite. They obeyed, and he wrote the gospel which now carries his name. Jerome assigns Ecclesiastical History as his authority for this account. This beloved disciple of Christ sets out with a preface contained in the fourteen first verses, whereof the three first exhibit such a proof of our Saviour's divinity, as no arts of the devil, or his agents, have been able to invalidate.

54. Ver. 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2. The same was in the beginning with God.

3. By him (the Word, see ver. 14.) were all things made, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.

That (in the beginning) signifies from all eternity, and can here signify nothing less, will be made evident presently by the

passage itself; so, that the Word was, and did exist from all eternity, is precisely the use and meaning of it in this place. Now as there is, or can be, at least to the faith of us Christians, but one only God, the Word is here asserted to have been, from all eternity, with that one only God, the Father. The very same verse then proceeds to tell us, that the same Word was from all eternity the one only God. It is to be carefully observed here, that neither the sense of the word (was) nor of the Word (God) can be supposed to have been by the Holy Ghost, here changed in the smallest degree, without the sin against the Holy Ghost, without, in short, charging him of falsehood, wilful deception, and equivocating, on the word God, the first word in all religion, and on the words (eternity) and (was) without giving the least warning of the smallest change of meaning; whereas the Arians will have it, that there is an infinite difference in every one of the three terms, particularly that, in the first place, the word God signifies the infinite eternal God, and in the second place, only a creature. But, that (in the beginning) may be the more carefully observed by the reader, it is again repeated, that the Word was in the beginning with God. And farther still, to put the doctrine of our Saviour's true and real divinity beyond all question, the third verse assures us, that by him (the Word) were all things made, and that without him was not any thing made that was made. Now, who was it that existed before all creation, that is, from all eternity? The one God alone, who was never made, nor created, and by whom alone all other things were made or created. The Holy Spirit, by St. Paul, had said as much, and rather more, ere the Gospel of St. John was written, Coloss. i. 16, 17, by him (Christ) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. In various other places of this gospel, pursuant to the intention of writing it, the divinity of Christ is clearly asserted by himself and others with his approbation. 'My Father and I,' saith he, 'are one Being,' ἓν εσμεν. 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am. St. Thomas hath the approbation of Christ for calling him his Lord and his God: and John finishes this gospel, as he had begun it, with saying, that Christ created the whole universe. There are many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be

written, every one, I suppose, that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Is there a figure here, or a hyperbole, as some commentators will have it? Not even the shadow of it. It is in quite a different manner, that this evangelist speaks of what Christ did in the flesh, 20. 30, 31, many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this, but in those of three other evangelists; but these are written, that ye might believe, contrary to the heresies of the Ebionites and Cerinthians, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the I AM, and one Being with his Father. The truth here delivered in this last verse of St. John's gospel is literally a truth, and but the same with the third verse of this very book. If all the skies were paper, and all the seas were ink, as an old writing master's copy had it, they would be totally exhausted, ere the creation of this one little globe we live on could be dilated.

55. In the twenty-first verse of this chapter, St. John the Baptist is asked by the messengers of the Sanhedrim, if he is (that prophet?) and he answers, he is not. What he and they meant, for they did mean the same thing (by that prophet), is left to us in some obscurity. The word seems to me to have been used by way of eminence, and must, I think, have pointed at the great Prophet, whose coming was foretold by Moses.

56. Gospel of St. John iii. 10. the Jews called their baptism of proselytes a regeneration, at the very time when this dialogue happened, and had done the same, I know not how long before.

57. Ibid. v. 23. (That all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father) it was Christ himself who said by Isaiah, 'my glory will I not give to another.' These two passages, laid together, fully refute the inferiority of nature and dignity ascribed to Christ by the Arians, and the worship of saints and angels, whereof the Romanists are guilty.

58. Ibid. vi. 27. Him (Christ the bread of our souls) *hath the Father sealed* with his own name, as the bakers did their loaves.

59. Ibid. vi. 53. (Except a man eat the flesh, &c.) that this is to be understood of the Eucharist, is very plain to me, as our blessed Saviour, in this passage, four times repeats the distinction between his flesh and blood, and between eating and drinking, which strongly implies some distinction of ideas, not only in the things received, but in the acts of receiving. Now this distinc-

tion, as to the present passage, is found in the Eucharist alone, to the institution whereof, the necessity here included is previous and preparatory, as were also his predictions of his death. Every plain reader understands this verse of the holy sacrament; and here the necessity of reception in both kinds by the laity, as well as the clergy, is clearly determined. In what follows too ver. 63, transubstantiation, or the literal construction of flesh and blood, is as clearly precluded. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speak unto you, both on this, and on other occasions, they are spirit, and they are life, and are to be understood spiritually of that life, which is to be fed and maintained by the spiritual nourishment of the soul, provided for it at the expense of my life.

60. Ibid. x. 36. Said *a fortiori* and *ad hominem*.

61. Ibid. xiv. 9. (He that hath seen me hath seen the Father) in the same sense of spiritual discernment. Philip had never seen Christ in any other sense. Even among ourselves, we can have no other sight of one another. Thus only a spirit can be seen. In the spiritual sense the Father and the Son are one Being.

62. Ibid. xix. 15. (We have no king but Cæsar) in this arraignment of Christ before Pilate, a sub-governor of Judea, there was such a complication of designs in the interfering parties, as one would imagine, could not possibly be all of them accomplished; and yet all were. Christ was to fulfil the prophecies, which foretold his death. The high priest and Pharisees were determined to take his life. Pilate, still preserving some appearance of a just judge, was to bring the Jews, if that might be, to a public acknowledgment of the Roman power over Judea, as founded on right. Christ could not plead guilty, for he had committed no sin; nor not guilty, for he was then guilty of all our sins: neither could this distinction be mentioned to a heathen judge, who would have taken it for distraction. Our Saviour, therefore, as a sheep before her shearers, was dumb. The innocence of our Saviour being acknowledged by the judge, the Jews were desired to take Christ, and crucify him, pursuant to their outcry for his blood. But they answered, that though they had a law which inflicted death on his offence of calling himself the Son of God, yet they had no power to execute it, which was the same as pleading their right, and at the same time complaining, that the power of life and death had been taken

from them by the Romans. After this, Pilate hearing Christ declare himself a King, asked the Jews if he should crucify their King? As soon then, as they were by their malice compelled to own, they had no king but Cæsar, the very thing that Pilate was driving them to, he gave up Christ to their clamours. Their so soon afterward taking up arms against the Romans, shewed they had as little sincerity as justice in their declaration, and brought on that excision of their nation, wherewith Providence chastised their enormous guilt, by the hands of those very Romans.

63. Ibid. xx. 23. The authority and power of conferring absolution on penitents, wherewith our gracious Saviour hath so clearly vested his ministerial successors whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained, having been abused by the church of Rome into a lucrative market of pardons and indulgences, it is no wonder that Luther, and all our first reformers, should have taken infinite offence at a practice so flagitious, and so directly contrary to the command of Christ, 'freely ye have received, freely give.' This however should not have been a reason, as it was with too many, for rejecting all absolutions. They who threw off the scriptural government of the church, for a reason of the same kind, acted consistently with themselves, and, I fear, with the nature of their new-invented orders, in not allowing them the power of absolution, however inconsistent they have been in both with the word of God. Our church having strictly adhered to both the original orders of Christ's and the Holy Spirit's appointment, hath also adhered to the absolving power wherewith those orders were vested. It seems therefore to me surprising, that many of our divines reject this power, as ill founded or misunderstood. Between the words of our blessed Saviour, and their own opinions, they have been forced to whiffle and nibble at a sort of medium, whereof neither they, nor their readers, can make any thing better than nonsense. The true doctrine is, and must be this. For the consolation of his church, and particularly of such as class with the penitent publican in the gospel, Christ hath left with his bishops and presbyters a power to pronounce absolution. This absolution is on condition of faith and repentance in the person or persons receiving it. On sufficient appearance of these, and on confession, made with these appearances in particular persons, the bishop or presbyter, as the mes-

senger of Christ, is to pronounce it. But he cannot search the heart, God only, who can, confirms it. His act in pronouncing is not the less authoritative on account of the aforesaid conditions, as his acts in consecrating and administering the Lord's supper are not less peculiarly his office, or authoritative, because the benefits of that sacrament are conveyed through his hands, only on the same conditions, whereof, as to their reality and sufficiency in the receiver, he can be but an imperfect judge. As Christ hath been pleased to place his inestimable benefits in earthen vessels, and to communicate them by men, though of like passions with other men, yet duly authorized, his real disciples will humbly receive them in his way of conveyance, and not presumptuously snatch at them in ways of their own. When a great number of subjects have rebelled against their king, and he in his mercy sends forth his servants to proclaim a pardon to all such as are willing to lay down their arms, and return to their duty, those servants can proclaim the pardon to those only who have thrown away their arms, and supplicated for mercy. Yet, of such as do, some may but dissemble, and the king may know them, and by banishment distinguish them from the rest. It does not follow however, that this or that rebel may take upon him to pronounce his majesty's pardon to his partisans in rebellion, whether conditionally or unconditionally. So much is due to majesty and mercy, as to take this from the servants of both, duly authorized, and not at random from others. The preaching of God's word, the administration of his sacraments, the denunciation of his judgments, and the proclamation of his pardons, are so connected with, and dependent on one another, as to make up but one and the same commission, rather than distinct or separate parts of it. It is our wisdom to take all together; and it will be a desperate folly to take only such as we like in it, and to leave the rest, as men that deal with one another in a common bargain, and not with God, on his own undeserved grant. Excommunication was, from the beginning, inflicted on persons guilty of notorious crimes; and humility, contrition, confession in case of sins, whether venial or heinous, if secret, were practised also from the beginning, and down through every age of the church, in order to the enjoyment of her inestimable privileges, and had never ceased to be practised, but because men, vainly calling themselves Christians, grew too proud for these means of true reformation; and other men, as avaricious as these were

proud, took upon them for money to lead them through by-paths to a reconciliation with God, as if God could not see what impious wretches they were, both guides and guided. The power of absolution is remarkably exercised by St. Paul, though absent, and depending on both report and the information of the Holy Spirit, in regard to the Corinthian excommunicated for incest. The apostle, speaking in the character of one to whom the authority of absolution had been committed, saith to the church of Corinth, 'To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also,' 2 Cor. ii. 10. Thus the penitent was pardoned, and restored to communion by delegated authority in the person of Christ, lest such a one should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow, and lest Satan should get an advantage over us. As these reasons for compassion still remain, it seems evident that the church should still retain the same power of shewing that compassion, as far as human understanding may direct its application.

64. Ibid. xxi. 24. (We know that his testimony is true) attestation of the church and Christians for the person who wrote this gospel, and for the truth of its contents.

65. Acts v. 4. It is most evident here, that lying to the Holy Ghost was lying to God, which could not be if the Holy Ghost is not God.

66. Ibid. ix. 6. (Four hundred years) from the birth of Isaac to the emigration of the Hebrews out of Egypt, during all which time the posterity of Abraham sojourned in a strange land, Canaan, and Egypt, under the princes of those countries, and were generally ill treated.

67. Ibid. ix. 7. (Heard a voice) but no words.

68. Ibid. x. 27. (Can any man forbid water, that these should be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?) The pretence of the Quakers, who say they have received the baptism of the Holy Ghost by fire, and therefore despise water-baptism as a beggarly element, is hereby condemned by the application of water-baptism to Cornelius and his family, after they had already been baptized by an infinitely better spirit than that which such pretenders claim, in order to vilify the ordinance of Christ, although his Holy Spirit in St. Peter had thus ordered its administration to persons, already endued with the true and real Holy Ghost, and for that very reason, because they had previously received the Holy Ghost.

69. Ibid. xiii. 2, 3. (The Holy Ghost said, Separate me

Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them, and sent them away.) Here a regular ordination and mission are prescribed by the Holy Ghost for two men, already endued with the Holy Spirit, as requisite in them to a full and authoritative exercise of their ministry. What then can we think of their presumption, who take this ministry upon them, without being either ordained or sent?

70. Ibid. xvii. 23. (Unknown God.) It hath been conjectured, and not without reason, that this altar was one of those erected by Epimenides throughout the city, on each of which a black ram was offered, when thereby the plague of Athens was stayed. Perhaps the Greek word αγνωστος was intended to signify the incomprehensible, as well as the unknown God.

71. Ibid. xix. 24. (Shrines.) Little models of Diana's temple, with an image of that goddess, made of silver, and sold about to her devotees.

72. Ibid. xxi. 15. (Carriages) should be baggage.

73. Ibid. xxii. 9. (Heard not the voice) the intelligible voice, perhaps because spoke to Paul in the Hebrew tongue, which the soldiers or party of Paul might not have understood, and which none of the Romans, and very few of the Jews at that time did. That Christ did on that occasion speak in the Hebrew tongue, St. Paul himself afterward tells king Agrippa.

74. Ibid. xxiii. 5. (I wist not that he was the high priest) and how could he? For if we believe Josephus, Annas was not at that time high priest, neither indeed had there, for many years before, any high priest been constituted according to the Mosaic law. Besides, Paul could not at that time confess any man to be high priest, but Christ; and the little apology he makes afterward is but a civil compliment due to any man in mere apparent authority, and justified by his own doctrine. Rom. xiii. 1.

75. Ibid. From the twentieth verse of the last chapter in this book to the end, it is probable, that the gospel was first preached by St. Paul in Rome; and that he, not St. Peter, was the founder of the church in that city, when, as yet, there were few, if any, Christians there. It is true, he was met at Appii-Forum by some men, whom Luke calls brethren, ver. 15, but so he might style them as mere Jews; for that they were not yet Christians, appears very probable from their inquiring, what he thought concerning the sect of Christians, when they met him again at Rome,

ver. 22. observing to him, that it was then every where spoken against. This is the language of strangers to it; and the extreme coldness, or rather aversion, they shewed for it, on his first preaching it to them, does not at all favour the supposition of their having been previously believers. Neither this, nor the manner of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans suits the opinion, that he wrote it before he had seen that city. Whether St. Peter was ever there, is disputed by some. I believe he was, but that he built on the foundation laid by St. Paul, and was not therefore the founder, nor first bishop of the Roman church .

76. Romans i. 19, 20. Here it is made plain, that all idolaters are without excuse, inasmuch as that which may be known of God is manifest in themselves, and in the works of creation, even the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator. In the twenty-first verse it is said, that the idolaters knew God. By revelation they knew him from the beginning; and having his works of creation to demonstrate his infinite wisdom and goodness, they could have no excuse for their departure from him, and worshipping the creature; for they could not plead the want of means to keep up in their minds a knowledge so notified, so proved; but they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves wise, they became fools; so that, without a farther revelation, they could not be brought back to the use of common sense in this first and greatest article of knowledge.

77. Ibid. ii. 14, 15. The Gentiles have written in their hearts an approbation of good, and an abhorrence of evil actions, instincts which become laws to them, as soon as they know it to be the will of their Creator that they should obey them. For this purpose they are in no need of the Mosaic law, if they come to Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life; and without whom no man cometh to the Father, either in knowledge or love. How can a man consider that to be a law, which he knows not to be the mind or dictate of any legislator? Of these Gentiles, Cornelius appears to be the first on record; and he too was brought to Christ by a particular and express revelation. The grace of God had been with his excellent dispositions, before the angel was sent to him.

78. Ibid. iii. 29. The God of the Old Testament, and of the New, is one and the same God, namely, Jesus Christ.

79. Ibid. ix. 3. (From) a most unfortunate translation for

(ὑπο) which signifies under! If ὑπο was used by St. Paul, as I verily believe it was. Paul here could wish to be a curse under Christ for his brethren, that as Christ was made a curse for us, Gal. iii. so he might be a secondary curse in humble imitation of Christ for the Jews, if that might be a means to bring them to Christ. In some hope that his suffering might possibly be of use in this respect, he thus speaks to the Colossians, i. 24. 'I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the suffering of Christ in the flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church.' I am sensible that the greater number of ancient copies had απο before του Χριστου, but some had ὑπο, which, in a preposition so often abbreviated by transcribers into, perhaps, one mixed character, might easily give occasion to the mistake of the former for the latter; but the latter gives the passage so good and clear a sense, that I am convinced it was written by the apostle, and not the former, which seems to make that saint wish for his own damnation, rather than for that of his Jewish brethren. To be separated from Christ, and that with an anathema, or curse, could never have been the wish of St. Paul. The excellent Waterland, even retaining the απο, gives the passage nearly the same sense I do, from the use made by the same apostle of that preposition, 2 Tim. i. 2, 3. verses, where he sets himself forth as serving God απο from, after, or in the manner of, his progenitors, with a pure conscience.

80. Ibid. ix. from verse the 24th to verse 29th inclusive, the whole is parenthetical.

81. Ibid. xii. 20. (Heap coals of fire on his head.) Here our doing good for evil to our enemies, is an allusion to the chymical operation of placing some very hard body in a crucible, and adding fire below, around, and on the top of it, in order to bring that body into a state of fusion. The similitude of fire for Christian charity is most beautiful, and is highly improved by the idea of intenseness in the use of a crucible.

82. 1 Cor. i. 25. (The foolishness of God is wiser than men.) The Greek word, for which our translation puts (foolishness) is not μωρια, which signifies (folly) but μωρον, a foolish thing; and what foolish thing can here be understood? I believe divine revelation, not so much because it may so be deemed by the Greek philosophers, as because, infinitely superior as it is to all the wisdom of men, it is that wherein God hath discovered far less of his wisdom than in his work of creation; for in the former

he speaks down to the capacities of men, as fathers among us do to their little children, who could not understand them, if spoken to in such language as fathers use to one another; though the difference here is so minute, if compared to the difference between God and man. With stammering lips and another tongue, God vouchsafes to speak to us his poor ignorant people. Isa. xxviii. 11.

83. Ibid. i. 28. (Things that are not, to bring to nought things that are.) It is God who doth this, and calleth things that are not, as though they were. Rom. iv. 17.

84. Ibid. iii. 28. (Let him become a fool, that he may be wise.) No man ever became wise, until after he had found himself to be a fool, for how indeed should he? A man thinking himself full to the brim with knowledge, thinks he can hold no more, and therefore will not read, inquire, or take advice. However, the wisdom condemned in this text is worldly wisdom, and the wisdom recommended is spiritual. The worldly, of all men, is the most closely shut up against religion. His briars and thorns choke the word. Above all others he is that natural man, to whom the things of God are foolishness. If the grace of God was ever with him, he scatters it from him faster than he gathers money.

85. Ibid. vii. 31. (Not abusing) should be (not indulging themselves much in the enjoyment of it.) The context requires this interpretation, and the preposition κατα signifies intensively, as well as contrarily.

86. Ibid. viii. 13. Instead of (lest I make my brother to offend) it should be (lest I offend my brother.)

87. Ibid. xv. 28. Were this deep text found any where but in the Bible, we should think it a vain presumption to inquire into the meaning. As the distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with their respective offices in the economy of creation, redemption, and sanctification, was revealed as necessary to our understanding that economy, it appears to me, that the dominion over all things in heaven and earth committed to the Son, is to terminate as soon as the final judgment shall be passed; and that then God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, shall during eternity afterward, and to the whole intelligent creation, be God all in all, as the apostle expresses it τα παντα εν πασιν, that is, all things, Father, Saviour, Comforter, in and to all things, without any ideas, or terms of distinction. If I am too bold here, I pray God to forgive me, and I trust he will, as I write with fear and trembling.

88. Ibid. xv. 29. (If the dead rise not, why are they then baptized for the dead?) This appears a difficult passage, insomuch that some heretics of old, laying hold of it, baptized a living person for one who had died unbaptized. The Marcionites were among these, whom Tertullian corrects by a very just interpretation of the passage. To be baptized for the dead, saith this father, is to be baptized for the body, which is declared to be dead by baptism; that is, we are baptized into the belief of the resurrection of the body, the death and resurrection of which are both represented in baptism. This interpretation, let me add, is justified by St. Paul himself, his own best interpreter, in the sixth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. However, as his expression here in the fifteenth of his first Epistle to the Corinthians is ὑπερ των νεκρων, strictly speaking, *upon the dead*, it is hardly a doubt with me, no more than it was with several men of more learning than me, that some pious catechumens, even in the time of our apostle, chose to be baptized on the graves of martyrs in the nocturnal assemblies of the Christians, who, in time of persecution, met at night about those graves for every purpose of devotion and edification, in order to be more feelingly reminded of all Christian duties, and more especially of their federal engagements entered into in the sacrament of baptism. When persecution ceased, and they had the benefit of churches, this might have given occasion to their burying in or near those sacred edifices, and calling them by the names of the most distinguished martyrs and saints. This, I confess, is but matter of very probable conjecture, as we cannot trace the practice historically up to the time of St. Paul, though we may as far as a few centuries after.

89. Ibid. xv. 32. (Let us eat and drink, &c.) Eat, drink, and play, saith Sardanapalus in his epitaph at Tarsus, the birth place of St. Paul, which city, together with Anchiale, that luxurious prince is said to have built in one day.

90. Ephes. ii. 14. (Middle wall) which divided the Jews, repairing to the temple, from their Gentile converts, or half proselytes.

91. Philippians iii. 2. (Concision) cutting in sunder of the church by men not circumcised themselves, but insisting on the law to the division of Christ's body.

92. 2 Thess. ii. 3. (He who now letteth or hindereth.) The Roman emperor, or empire; for antichrist could not come until the dissolution of that empire, and then did come in the character

of a man that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. It was this prophecy that alarmed the primitive Christians in such a manner, that though persecuted by the Romans, they continually and earnestly prayed for the preservation of that empire, lest a tyranny more destructive of true religion should succeed it, which soon followed on the irruption of the northern nations.

93. 1 Tim. v. 17. 19. (Let the elders, &c.) these were the same with bishops, chapter iii. and here subject to the jurisdiction of Timothy. The terms, apostle, evangelist, bishop, elder, were not used technically, but sometimes promiscuously, by the writers of the New Testament. Here however the powers of three offices, one ruling, and the other two subordinate, are kept distinct. Timothy governs, and the elders and deacons obey. This government and subordination was originally the appointment of the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls; and here by the Holy Spirit set forth in fact as ruled and established for the body or church of Christ. As long as the apostles were able to attend and govern the few churches, gathered out of Jews and Greeks, they themselves filled the highest order of the church, and exercised the episcopal power. But James, instead of circulating to convert, confirm, and govern churches in different parts of the world, took up his residence in Jerusalem, and governed that diocess episcopally. As the number of churches increased; as the apostolic college was thinned by death; and as divisions arose in this or that church; the establishment of resident bishops became every where necessary, that the original institution and regular government might be preserved, and that the promise of Christ to be with his church to the end of the world, might be fulfilled in an ostensible succession of governors, filling the office of the apostles in every age, so far as all the intents and purposes of the spiritual society could be answered, after the ceasing of miracles and divine inspiration. Were it necessary to be proved, which it is not, that this spiritual society, like all others, must have some particular form of government, some subordination, and order, the practice of those churches, which have rashly renounced the sacred appointment of Christ and the Holy Ghost, would fully prove it, for they have been forced to invent a form of government for themselves, as far inferior to the old, as to every purpose of peace and charity, to say no more, as the inventions of men are to the ordinances of God.

94. Second Epistle to Timothy, i. 10. The immortality of the soul was an article of faith with many Gentiles, as well as Jews, before the coming of Christ, but groped after by the former so much in the dark, and by the latter founded on a twilight-prospect, that our blessed Saviour may be truly said, as here, to have brought it into open day-light. There was but one nation among the old Scythians that believed in it; and Greeks had little or no notion of it, before they were taught it by Pherecydes the Syrian, the preceptor of Pythagoras. As to the Jews, this leading article of faith, together with other dependent truths of religion, was dispensed, precept upon precept, line upon line, more and more, but rose not to its full meridian or perfect day, until it shone forth in Jesus Christ.

95. Ibid. iv. 6. (σπενδομαι) I am libated, the libation is poured on my head, and I am ready to be offered up.

96. In the Epistle to Titus, bishops and elders signify the same persons, namely elders, for they were all subject to Titus, as in his days there were no such officers as archbishops.

97. Ibid. iii. 4—6. (God our Saviour) by the washing of regeneration hath saved us, and by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. We have but one Saviour, who is God.

98. Ibid. ver. 11. (Being condemned of himself,) for if, after the first and second admonition by his bishop, he still persists in his heresy, is he not condemned by himself? What need of farther evidence in any court or trial?

99. Heb. ii. 16. (ἐπιλαμβανεται,) laid hold of, is in our translation rightly rendered (took on him the nature) as to the real meaning which could not be verbatim made intelligible in English.

100. Ibid. chap. vii. Herein the apostle, speaking of Melchisedec, says, he was without father and mother; without beginning or ending of days; receiving tithes of Abraham; as better and superior, blessing that patriarch; and founding an everlasting priesthood; not only commencing before, but continuing after, the priesthood of Aaron; and must, by Melchisedec, King of Righteousness, and Prince of Peace, have meant our blessed Saviour, who is our righteousness and Prince of our peace with his Father. It is the priority and superiority of Melchisedec and his priesthood to Aaron and the Jewish dispensation, that make the matter and drift of this chapter. It is indeed impossible to find the character of Melchisedec, as here given, in any mere

man. As to the Melchisedecian heretics of old, their principles were wholly different from, and opposite to, the interpretation given above of this chapter.

101. James iii. 1. [My brethren, be not many masters (διδασκαλοι, teachers, in the Greek) knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation, for in many things we offend] all directly contrary to this charge of the Holy Ghost, and in contempt of his menace, here awfully delivered, is the practice of our fanatics, among whom every man takes upon him to be a teacher, and to pass his own nonsense upon his poor giddy brethren, for the dictates of the Holy Ghost. This is a degree of spiritual pride and presumption, so impious that the condemnation threatened must, sooner or later, fall on them with proportionable aggravation.

102. 1 Peter iv. 8. (Fervent) εκτενη, extensive both in time and number of objects.—(Charity shall cover the multitude of sins) shall not only throw an indulgent skirt over the weaknesses of others, and even the injuries of our own enemies, but shall cover and hide our sins also, if we practise it, from the eyes of God. בפו signifies both a covering and a sacrifice for sin. If the apostle had the twofold sense of this word in his eye, the allusion is beautiful. The author of the book of Tobit makes the angel speak to him and his son Tobias after much the same manner, chap. xii. 9. Alms shall deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin.

103. 1 John i. 5. God is light. Jesus is every where styled light, and *the* light, particularly in the writings of this apostle; Jesus therefore is God.

104. Ibid. v. 20. This is the true God, and eternal life, spoken of Jesus, as is evident from its connexion with the foregoing part of the same verse, see chap. i. ver. 5. of this Epistle, ver. 12. of this chapter; Gospel of St. John xiv. 16. where Christ calls himself the life, ibid. viii. 58. where Christ takes to himself the incommunicable name of God.

105. St. Jude, ver. iv. 25. Who were these creepers into the church? Not unconverted Jews, not Atheists, not Pagans, surely. No; but a sort of Christians, or professors rather of Christianity. Now all professors of Christianity did then, as they do still, confess the Father to be God. They therefore, who in the days of St. Jude, denied the only Lord God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, were the Ebionites and Cerinthians. These men denied the divinity of Christ, and in some degree his humanity likewise. To

overthrow this heresy, our apostle here sets forth the Lord God and Jesus Christ to be the same, and styles him the only wise God our Saviour.

106. The Apocalypse, written by John the Apostle.

The first three chapters of this book, addressed to the seven churches of Asia by name, are written in a style most sublime and enforcing, made up of commendations, reproofs, and exhortations, very intelligible. The remainder is wrapped up in visions, emblems, and such clouds as the prophets always used, when the great Inspirer intended that his predictions should be explained only by the events pointed to, and not otherwise, nor before the time of those events. We can easily comprehend two probable motives for this obscurity. In the first place, had the time and circumstances of the completion been literally and plainly expressed in the prophecy, infidels by thousands would have attempted to prevent that completion, as Julian did in the case of our Saviour's prophecy concerning the temple at Jerusalem; and in order to their design, being at liberty to do as they pleased, would have perverted the order of things in a manner most opposite to that order, and the intentions of Providence. And yet in the next place, the completion, fully explaining the prediction, serves to refresh our faith, and to justify the prophet in different ages, as that refreshment may be wanted to our inattention or incredulity. A prophecy fulfilled in our own time, and in our sight, hath a very different effect from that which the history of a former age concerning its completion is apt to have. Nevertheless, the completion by events hath several times already justified the foresight of the prophet who left this book on record; whereof the ruin of the Roman empire was one, and the rise and progress of antichrist is another, now visibly exhibited in our sight. The time of his coming is marked by the fall of the Roman empire; and the place by the seven mountains or hills, on which his church, under the name of the whore, is situated and in this book mystically called Babylon. The beast with seven heads and ten horns, which carrieth the whore, the same with that in Daniel vii. 8. is the Roman power or city, which St. John saith, speaking of his own time, reigned over the kings of the earth, destroyed by the northern nations, and divided into ten kingdoms, among which the pope, or little horn, at first little, ariseth; yet soon, with a mouth speaking great things, but in due time perishing in the final destruticon of the beast on which he stands. This beast which

was, and is not, and yet is, chap. xvii. 8. was in the civil power of Rome, is not at the time of its ruin under the northern nations, and yet is revived in an ecclesiastical power of the Roman pope. With this great whore the kings of the earth have committed fornication; and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. The kings who parcelled the beast, or Roman empire, among themselves on its dissolution, for some time gave their strength and power to the beast, ecclesiastically revived, but now begin (witness Henry VIII. of England, the emperor of Germany, the kings of France and Spain, &c.) to hate the whore, to make her desolate and naked, to eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. The waters where the whore sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, ver. 15. debauched and bewitched by the policy of the whore, whose priests. in chap. xviii. are adumbrated by merchants, trading in variety of goods, the bill of parcel whereof ends with souls of men, made merchandise of by these traders. They and their goods are beautifully figured and contrasted by an allusion to the Tyrians, and the articles of trade they dealt in, see Ezek. chap. xxvii. The enormous corruption, both as to principle and practice, of this Babylon, her visible decay of power already begun, and her final ruin evidently approaching, are all, in this eighteenth chapter of the Apocalypse, so strongly painted by the prophetic pencil, and ripening so fast into a full completion, that the faith of a thinking Christian may receive from thence a reinforcement, not inferior to the performance of a number of miracles wrought in its sight. Was there any thing more difficult to be foreseen than this immense complication of transactions, of as great importance as any that ever happened among mankind, and extending through at least ten centuries? This is now no longer an obscure prophecy; nor will any of the rest, contained in the Apocalypse, continue always to be so. Time will as clearly develope them all. To be made sensible of this, conjecture should never be indulged, and history alone consulted.

107. It is most certain, that all sorts of people are concerned in civil government, for they feel its effects in their persons and properties. Hence it is, that from the first minister of state down to the wife of a cobbler, all are politicians, made so however more by vanity and party, than by the interest they have either in the laws or government of their country, or by any wish they have to change that for the better of which they complain. They all in-

deed wish to be uppermost in the state, and to govern, rather than to be governed. They wish for wealth and power, which they soften down into the specious name of liberty. Of all men, the cut-throat and robber have this wish most at heart; but having lost all powers of self-government, the rest of mankind, aware of their wish, agree to confine them to a jail first, and then to a grave. It is well for civil society, that the less violent politicians are kept low and poor, who otherwise might become equally outrageous. Of the three forms of civil government, the monarchical, the aristocratical, and the democratical, the second hath by experience been found the worst; as in Poland, and in Sweden, before the late revolution in that country. The last hath been found the best for a religious and virtuous people, and by far the worst for a people of the contrary character, worse a great deal than even the second. The monarchical is undoubtedly the best for an irreligious and wicked sort of people; nay, in this both the other forms must always terminate very soon after religion and virtue cease to influence the designs and actions of mankind. Whatsoever share the nobles or people have had in making or executing the laws of any country, they always dispose of it to the highest bidder, if there is not religion and virtue enough to forbid the sale. Ambition never fails to furnish such bidders, either at home or from abroad, who by the force of money and arms set themselves at the head of affairs, of whom the former are called usurpers, and the latter conquerors. This change arises from the nature of man; and it is so far happy for him, that as he hath no religion, nor virtue, nor love of his country, to govern him, he must fall into the hands of arbitrary power and coercion, which alone can do it; for any species of government is better than none. The ideot, the madman, the lawless, must fall into the hands of others; and the power must be absolute, to keep them within bounds. The Jews, the Athenians, the Spartans, the Romans, lost their civil liberty with their virtue. Cato, Brutus, Cassius, the best men of their age, endeavouring to preserve the expiring liberty of their country, perished in an attempt, the vanity whereof they ought to have seen, inasmuch as the Romans, in their time, debauched by luxury, and plunged in vices of every kind, were incapable of a retrieval. A ruinous civil war, which cost an ocean of blood, and miserably distressed the whole empire, ended, like the last convulsions of a dying body, in arbitrary power. This however was better than a per-

petual struggle for that which could no longer be kept up; and the reign of even Nero was a happier state for the bulk of that people, than a continuance of the miseries which led to it could have been. If it were not that we Christians, and especially churchmen, are forbidden to deal in politics, it would be a matter of certainty, that the soundest divine must be the best politician; as all morality, and all government, must originate in religion. Directly contrary to this is the maxim which now prevails among us. We talk of politics, and every party throws the blame of all our political miscarriages on some opposite party, without so much as thinking or of discussing their altercations by a reference to religion. God is as little heard of among them, as if there were no God; or as if every party were conscious to itself of a total impropriety in appealing to him. As long ago as in the publication of Lord Anson's voyage, this forgetfulness of God and religion became observable. The journal of that voyage came out in the name of the chaplain to his ship. Therein mention was made, and very affecting descriptions given, of many dreadful dangers and happy escapes, particularly in doubling Cape Horn; and afterward, when the captain and the greater part of the crew were on shore at the desert island of Tinian, their ship being blown off to sea, they did not know how far, and they occupied in building somewhat between a barge and a raft of green timber, to carry them to the Philippine Islands, the ship, as the journal tells us, *providentially* returned. Excepting this one word *providentially*, there is not a single tittle in the whole journal that savours of an acknowledgment to the Divine Goodness. It was matter of much astonishment and indignation to the religious reader, to find the chaplain's religion, after so many signal deliverances, contained in a single adverb. But the truth is, the good chaplain had so swelled his journal with ejaculations, that the publishers thought fit to put it into the hands of a templar, who atheised and fitted it to the taste of the times. It was not many years after, when the greater part of these kingdoms were ready to take up arms against one of the best kings they were ever blessed with, in defence of a man who had publicly blasphemed both God and the king, as if not more jealous of the latter for interfering in the government of a nation he was charged with, than of the former's providential interposition in that of a world created by himself. Was this acting at all on the principles of fearing God, or honouring the king? In the late war, on any

advantage gained over the enemy, the generals always ascribed their petty successes to themselves, their officers, and men, but never to the God of battles. What this bodes to our declining country is not difficult to foresee; nor in what the market is to end, which is now made of place, power, and wealth, not only in the state, but in the church too, can the few people among us of any religion be at a loss to apprehend? An avenging hand of Providence is not necessary to the dreadful catastrophe, which we are labouring to pull down on our own heads. Christ's kingdom is not of this world. It is a spiritual kingdom. Had the kingdoms of this world, as they ought to have done, become the kingdoms of Christ, then had mankind been governed by his meek, humble, and charitable spirit; then had peace and honesty ruled over the hearts and actions of all men; then had ambition, avarice, and wars, been banished from the earth. But it is now a long time since a contrary spirit hath domineered over the Christian world, no less than over the minds of pagans and infidels; and all its frightful effects have followed. Therein may be found the reason why politics are prohibited among Christians, and why they are commanded by Christ to render to Cæsar the things that belong to Cæsar, and by the Holy Ghost to obey the civil power in every country, whether the form of government should be monarchical, aristocratical, or democratical. It was the adoption of quite opposite maxims that established the spiritual tyranny of modern Rome; and the Calvinistical cry of no king, no bishop, that stopped the progress of the Reformation, when the kings and bishops were using their utmost efforts to pull down that tyranny in the council of Trent, which had been assembled by the emperor and other powers of Europe, for that very purpose, in spite of all the pope's endeavours to prevent it. On this occasion, the kings and bishops, governed by politics, not much more justifiable in the sight of God than those of the other two parties, forsook a reformation which was to end, as they thought, in the ruin of themselves. Pursuant to their politics, the Calvinists established a republic, wherever it was in their power; and not satisfied with this species of politics in civil concerns, they stretched it also into the church, abolishing the episcopal appointment of Christ and the Holy Ghost, and inventing a new order and form of their own for the government of the church, for the preaching of God's word, and the administration of his sacraments. That the church, or religious society, must, from the be-

ginning, have had some form of government, as well as all other societies; and that in bishops, priests, and deacons, that form was fixed by our Saviour himself, and the Holy Spirit, must be evident to every candid reader of the holy Scriptures. This, were it needful, hath been unanswerably proved by Potter in his Treatise of church government. This form was adhered to as sacred by the whole church, from the days of Christ down to the Reformation, excepting by one or two insignificant sects, perfectly insignificant both as to their duration, and the paucity of their abettors. It is worth remarking here, that while the Calvinists, on the one side, pursuant to the political dictates of Machiavell, were destroying the episcopal order; the pope, on the other, attempted, by the aid of a number of factitious bishops, without dioceses, whom he sent to the council of Trent, to demolish episcopacy as not *jure divino*, but only *papali*. In this however he was defeated. After all, if any one maxim is to be embraced as of universal utility, if any one duty is admissible, as truly Christian, loyalty to the constitution, the laws, and government of our country, must be admitted and embraced. If not, hatred, malice, murder, oppression, extermination, &c. must be received as political benefits, if not as religious duties.

108. There is no one thing, wherein the understanding of a great man is so apt to be lost, as in natural philosophy. What is human genius to the infinity of creating wisdom? Methinks, when I read Lucretius in the light of a philosopher, I see a swan dipping his head through the water into the mire, and raising it again with a maggot in his bill, and a quantity of mud about it; methinks I see him with his head philosophically dozing under that wing, wherewith, as a poet, he outsoars the bird of Jove. The same thought strikes me, when I read the Anti-Lucretius of Polignac. What, another despicable philosopher! What, another admirable poet! How could such exalted thinking, and such despicable nonsense, subsist together in one head? In one like mine, a weak piece of reasoning, and a dash of tolerable nonsense, on account of their affinity and contiguity, may be well enough expected, and should not surprise.

109. Along with the infinite sweetness of our religion, its awful solemnity of the Eucharist ought, at all times, to be felt by every heart that hopes for salvation through it; and that which deepens this solemnity with astonishment and sorrow in every true believer, is the death of Jesus Christ, and the memory there-

of, celebrated in the sacrament of his last supper. In this the consciousness of our foul offences, which cost the eternal Son of God his life, should spread a mixture of gratitude and horror over our souls on a recollection, demanded by our infinite Benefactor himself, demanded, not for his own sake, but for ours, who can have no part in him, nor the salvation he hath wrought for us, but in proportion as we feel this gratitude for him, and horror at ourselves. He hath told us by his Spirit, that to continue in sin, 'is to crucify him afresh, and to put him again to open shame' before an infidel world, always ready to fling in his face, and charge on his religion, the foulness of our offences. This considered, the true Christian will, at all times, do his utmost to shew himself in the sight of God and man, in every thought, word, and action, a faithful follower of Christ. By this, and this alone, is it possible to ensure his own salvation, and to prove himself, to himself, to be a worthy communicant at the Lord's table. Whoever thus labours to approach his Saviour, is always prepared for that feast of love, and will never be an absentee, when invited to it; and his Saviour will by no means 'cast him out.' Nothing, but coolness to Christ, and attachment to sin, ever can, or indeed ever did, keep any man away from an assembly, running to 'praise the Lord for his goodness, and to declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men.' What then can charity itself think of the numbers who crowd to this sacrament at Christmas and Easter; and turn their backs on it, throughout the other parts of the year? Is not this blessed sacrament the same food of eternal life, the same call to piety and gratitude, at all times, and in all places? Does any particular day in the year make it more a sacrament, than it is on other days? Whether is the gratitude of a Christian, or an almanack, to regulate his conduct to Christ, and his own soul? It is evident he can come up to his idea of a good Christian in an act of devotion, when he pleases, by the two stationary weeks he gives to it, as if on those alone the Spirit of God were to wait his leisure and appointment. But here there is too much reason to fear his idea of Christian devotion, of self-examination, and of the infinite debt due to a dying Redeemer, runs too low to be of any use towards his own salvation, or to be at all accepted in return for the sacrifice of the cross. This is still the more to be feared (if feared we may call it) when it is but too evident, that his absence from the Lord's table, on ordinary occasions, is owing to that attachment to the enemies of

Christ and his poor soul, to which he warmly offers up the remaining fifty weeks of the year; for undoubtedly nothing but his coldness to Christ, and his warm attachment to the pomps, pleasures and profits of the world and the flesh, renounced by him in baptism, could deceive him into a conduct too preposterous to pass on his reason in any thing else. Common sense or reason, if listened to, would assure him, that this his behavour is nothing else, but presenting the hog of hell with the kernel, while he throws the husk to Christ. It were to be wished, that people who value themselves so highly on the use of reason and their intellectual powers, would be a little more careful to call them in, when infinite wisdom and majesty are to be dealt with. How dreadful a reflection is it, that God, of all masters, is the worst served! And that men have reason and consideration for every thing but God, the giver of reason! What rule of conduct can a rational Christian safely trust to, but that which he is sensible ensures the approbation of God? Or can he safely follow a multitude to do evil? That which he must know to be evil, if he is not worse than an idiot? Here let a man, who professes Christianity, ask himself how he can absent himself from the Lord's table ten or twelve times every year, and go to it only twice, as it were in compliment to two particular days? The practice here noted is one of those, which no terms, howsoever severe, can sufficiently brand. It is the most fatal self-deception, and a mocking of God, in one. If it is to avoid the damnation denounced by St. Paul, surely that denunciation ought to prevent the numerous attendance at Christmas and Easter, which must be most unworthy in the absentees at other times; but in what is that damnation more to be dreaded, than the spiritual death denounced by Christ in these equally alarming words, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that eateth not the flesh of the Son of man, and drinketh not his blood, hath no life in him.' Damnation, and the death of the soul, are only synonymous terms. It is so true, that this sacrament was intended for perpetual repetition until the final coming of Christ, that his form of institution can be no otherwise understood; that the infinite benefit of it can be no otherwise received; and that all Christians, in the time of the apostles, when the Spirit of God immediately governed the church, when the nature and use of the ordinance were best understood, and for three or four centuries afterward communicated at the Lord's table every day. *In qualia tempora devenimus!* If an adversary should object, or

a very ignorant Christian complain, that the terms of communion with Christ, and access to the benefits of his death, are made exceedingly dangerous by the eternal death on the one hand, and the damnation on the other; it ought surely to be considered, in the first place, what it cost our Saviour to procure this access, and obtain these terms for us, that we may not think the self-examination, and continual watchfulness over our ways, too much, on our part, to requite his condescension and sufferings for us. And it ought to be well considered, in the next place, that this very alarming guard on each side of our way to Him, and our own salvation, is not more than is necessary to creatures so apt to forget both Him and ourselves, and stupidly to trim our services between him and his enemies, the devil, the world, and our fleshly corruptions. Taking the matter in this light, we shall judge it one of the most wise and gracious dispensations of the gospel, that our way upward hath so frightful a precipice on our right hand, and on our left, made so visible to us, that we may easily avoid both, in case we use but a share of that caution, which in our worldly affairs of any moment we never fail to demonstrate. Herein however is no force put on us, for we may either leap from the narrow way, or go back, whenever we think Christ and heaven are not worth the pains of such a passage, not worth coming constantly, and well prepared, to the table of the Lord. It was very hard, or indeed rather impossible, for those Dissenters to apologize for their occasional comformity under the Test Act, who could for a place of worldly profit receive this sacrament with the established church, vilified by them, at all other times as superstitious, popish, and idolatrous. But what can be said for the pretended Christians and professed members of that church, who are no more than occasional conformists twice in the year, and during the rest dissent not only from that, but from the church of Christ, to a too close conformity with the world and the flesh?

110. That lawyer, who does not believe in an original lawgiver and judge of the universe, ought by no means to be intrusted with the cause of a single client. That physician, who doubts whether or no he himself hath a soul, ought not to have the care of another man's body. And that clergyman, who in eating, drinking, &c. does not keep a strict eye on his body, is most unfit to undertake a cure of souls. Such are, at best, but quacks in law, physic, and divinity. For my own part, as a clergyman,

I thought it my duty to lay out some time on the study of physic, that I might be of some use to the poorer part of my parishioners, in regard to their health in remote parts of the kingdom, where they were incapable of access to better advice. As this was a pure effect of charity, and as I never meddled with distempers or medicines, which I did not perfectly understand, I killed none, and by God's blessing cured many. This species of application having however led me to a considerable extent of physical reading, and to innumerable consultations in private with physicians of character, it is apparent to me (I ask pardon of the faculty) that the art of healing, if more than a child, is still but a minor. For this I am far from blaming the gentlemen of the profession, who are little, perhaps less, wanting to its improvement, as lawyers or divines are, in their respective departments. As matters are at present, every young physician must look out, as early as he can, for practice in order to bread; must therefore tread only in the path beaten by such as went before him; and consequently hath little or no leisure for experiments, which could he sometimes make, he must not venture them in prescription, lest if they should not prove successful, he should at once come into the world with a stillborn reputation and hope of business. As to older physicians, already arrived at extensive practice, their time is too much engrossed by patients, and by attention to the fortunes they are making, to tolerate any views of improvement in the art. The faculty itself can furnish no remedy for this evil, as it is left in this, unpatronised. Higher powers must be called to an interposal in this very important business, or physic must be given up, as hitherto it hath been, to casualties and precarious hypotheses. If the emperor, and present kings of Europe, could be made sensible of their influence in this behalf, the wished-for improvement might, in twenty or thirty years be brought to its highest degree of perfection; and during that whole period, receive a gradual and happy growth. My good intention will plead a pardon for the suggestion of two methods. The first is, of physical missionaries. The European potentates, having by agreement, divided the four quarters of the world among themselves, each might send to his own division four, five, or six missionaries, to pick up the physical knowledge and medicines of his own department. Do not laugh at this, ye learned doctors. In all ages, and throughout all countries, physic hath been practised; and different climates produce different medicines, whereof ye

yet know but few. On these the experience of men, equal to yourselves in natural sagacity, and the love of life, have been long at work. A very great part of all your knowledge, and a still greater part of all your medicines and methods of cure, have been handed down to you from such men. What else had your father Hippocrates to build on? From what other quarter had you your ipecacuanha, your jalap, your Peruvian bark, your opium, camphor, assafœtida, pareira brava, &c.? To be qualified for this mission, a man should be between the age of twenty-one and thirty, healthy, active, and inquisitive; and thoroughly well trained in the knowledge of physic, as now practised in Europe, not servilely wedded to that knowledge, but open to conviction. He should be well acquainted with the Latin, and French languages. His first year abroad should be laid out in acquiring some knowledge of the language of the people he is sent to, and the four other years of his mission, on its ultimate purpose. As often as opportunities may be found, he should transmit to the court from whence he travels an account of his discoveries, with samples of all the medicines in high repute there, especially if known by himself to deserve it. His salary should be six hundred pounds per annum during life, if the prince and college of physicians of his own country shall judge his services entitled to it. Nay, if on his return they find his journal worth publication, let him have a thousand per annum as long as he lives. This young man, practising physic in the country he goes to, may merit all its discoveries by commutation. He may also inculcate somewhat of true religion, and of wholesome laws, to the governors of ignorant and barbarous countries. The second method or project for the improvement of physic is, that of experiments on living men and women. Now for an uproar on the cruelty of a parson! Now for a senseless affectation of delicacy and tenderness, which costs nothing but empty words and wry faces, in a set of people, who would rather let a man perish than be the death of a fly, and would starve a woman to feed a lap-dog! I remember Chiselden took upon him to assert, and gave some reasons for so doing, that the tympanum is not the immediate organ of hearing, against the contrary old opinion held by almost all the body of anatomists. This produced a paper war, wherein an immensity of hard words was flung from both sides with jaculation dire. To determine a point however, not of the very last consequence, a fellow under sentence of death was extremely well pleased to have the perfora-

tion tried on both his ears, and his life given him, in case he survived the trial. At any rate, dying by a lancet was more eligible than by a rope. But it seems there was no great danger of death in the operation. The king consented. On this occasion the ladies, by their outcries of cruelty (what! dissections of living men? was it not enough to carve dead men like loins of pork?) prevailed, that the experiment should never be made, and the poor fellow, I suppose, was hanged, to spare their delicacy. My project notwithstanding, as soon as it is heard, will excite no alarms of this sort; but will, it is hoped, be embraced as fraught with utility to mankind, and mercy even to animals, inasmuch as it proposes, that thieves should not be put to death, that they should be dealt with as in the law of God; that they should have time to repent of their sins; and that the residue of their lives, passed under all the circumstances of tenderness, that may be safely shewn to such sort of men, should be employed to the benefit of their country, to which they have forfeited their liberty, if not their lives. For this just and humane purpose, some of them may be given up to coal-pits and other mines, by which the materials thence furnished may be produced at low rates to the consumers and manufacturers. But first, the physical faculty in each capital should have their choice of a certain number, to be kept in a strong house, as convenient as may be to said faculty, with a considerable field, well walled in, where the delinquents may be properly fed and exercised, and where the new medicines sent home by the missionaries, all sorts of indigenous plants, and every species of fossils, under every variety of preparation, may be tried inwardly and outwardly on the constitutions of said delinquents, beginning with very minute doses, when danger may be apprehended, and proceeding to larger, as the symptoms of safety shall encourage a yet freer experiment. In cases where great cause of suspicion may occur, experiments may be previously made on dogs, cats, swine, and tame fowl. But as it is not easy to judge how these are affected, but merely by survival, the prescribers must proceed for recipients to persons capable of describing the effects. That the experiments made on these men may succeed with others, their mode of living should be nearly the same with that of mankind in general, so far as their partial confinement shall permit. If any of these should grow sullen in regard to articles of disagreeable taste or smell, and should not appear to account truly for the internal operations of the medi-

cines administered, they must be turned over to the harder life of the mines. The dread of so severe a change will render them as amenable to their directors as can be reasonably wished. There is nothing internally medicinal, at least in my opinion, but so far forth as it is poisonous. In this class the most efficacious medicines must be looked for. In this light experiments require the utmost caution; but, that supposed, these may be made with as much safety as the administration of common food. On these subjects the effects of regimens and diets, howsoever opposite, may be tried. The free use of cold water, and cold bathing, in fevers, so successfully said to be practised in Persia and elsewhere, may be occasionally tried, and the change of one sort of fever to another of a safer kind, may be pushed for. As constitutional fevers are often, if not always, so many efforts of nature, critically to throw off some latent, or apparent chronical disorder, a way may be found of inducing such fevers, as may be most likely to produce this salutary effect. As the missionaries should keep journals, and under the revisal of their respective colleges, should publish them on their return; so each European college or faculty should annually publish, in French, an accurate account of their experiments, faithfully drawn up for the benefit of mankind at large. Were this, or some such scheme carried into execution, those trees, shrubs, weeds, which now only encumber the earth, might, in some years, be turned to as good account as its most wholesome and esculent productions. How many ages passed before mercury and antimony were found to produce medicines of the greatest and happiest efficacy? Thistles, ragworts, sea-rack, &c. are yet to be tried. The bark of the mangrove, shrewdly suspected by Wafer to contain virtues similar to the Peruvian, ought, by no means, to continue neglected, as it hath done ever since his curious observations made in the Isthmus of Darien were published. On account of their animal likeness to our species, the whole brute creation, especially apes, monkies, and baboons, ought to be carefully attended to, as to their disorders and recoveries. It is probable, there is not a sort of them less sagacious than our dogs, in a recourse to natural cures for their respective distempers. Iron, lead, copper, zinc, &c. have undergone hitherto but a very imperfect examination. By the execution of the project here but barely suggested, the profitable practice of physic in populous cities, and its experimental improvement, might be rendered coincident. At first, all medicines were only what we

now call old wives or vulgar recipes. With such the whole habitable world abounds; and of these thousands there are, which deserve the highest character, and the utmost attention. But without some such project, as this I have been hinting, they can never be brought home to us, nor so concentrated, as that the learned faculty may be made acquainted with them, and their patients reap the benefit of them. Hath the most ingenious part of mankind submitted to, or rather gloried in, the discovery of certain medicines, made by dogs and geese, and shall they not rather extend their inquiries among the rest of their own species, even in the most barbarous nations, where experiment hath evidently been more successful, if we may credit the accounts of rational and honest travellers, than hypothesis hath been among ourselves? We all remember when mustard, crude mercury, and tar water took their turns to be epidemic cures for all sorts of distempers. The general use of these things had this good effect, that they were found of great use in some cases, if they failed in others. Just so it may be reasonably presumed, that the endemial medicines of every country have been tried; and those retained, which for ages, were blessed for the recovery of health, and the preservation of life.

111. Man, or the microcosm, affords perhaps as many phenomena, as the great world. That man should be an atheist and wicked, is not among the least extraordinary; and yet a very good man, because he is a rarity, passes for a greater. I was acquainted with a woman, who regularly had her menstrual discharges from the skin over her right scapula. This skin, to the extent of about five inches, every way, lay half a line higher than the adjacent, and was always of a colour between red and purple. Her alterations were attended, for about ten days each, with sickness and misery inexpressible; but the evacuation was nearly as considerable as it ought to be, or as it had been, when more natural. A young woman, after a tedious and irregular fever, had an utter distaste to all manner of solid food, and lived almost wholly on water, whereof she drank three or four quarts every day, and a whole gallon every night. Thus she lived for several years, and was healthy, sprightly, fleshy, strong, and ruddy. The case of another woman is very well known to me, descended from families, on both sides, perfectly free from all sorts of women's complaints, who hath, for five or six years, been absolutely distracted, in consequence, I verily believe, of sleeping with a husband, as well before, as after

he went mad, during the space of ten or twelve years, to whom the disorder was remarkably hereditary. If the bite of a mad man is as dangerous as that of a mad dog, and experience hath proved it so to be, why may not a similar sort of virus be communicated from the perspiratory pores of one person into the absorbents of another? This very extraordinary instance may possibly have escaped the attention of physical gentlemen. I know an instance of a man, who survived five apoplectic fits; and was well assured of another, a labouring man, who, though he eat as plentifully as other men of his condition, had no evacuation by stool oftener than once in four or five months, but had at all times a plentiful sensible perspiration. Johnson and Muretus give us an account of a Corsican at Florence, who could regularly repeat a list of three thousand proper names, after hearing them but once deliberately read over to him. The cases of Seneca and Adrian, howsoever marvellous, were nothing to this; nor was that of Xerxes, to whom every soldier in his army, consisting of a million, was known by face and name. My own case, in one respect, seems curious and extraordinary to the physicians of my acquaintance. Honey is in a small degree poisonous to at least one stomach in twenty; but to mine it is highly so. If I happen by accident to swallow the least quantity of it, almost immediately afterward, the palate of my mouth, and the entrance into my gullet, seem as if stuck full of infinitely fine needles; and the sensation is somewhat between that of pain and tickling. Almost instantly after this, the passage between my nose and throat feels as if plugged up by a finger thrust into it; and this scarcely ceasing, my stomach is affected in the same manner, as I believe it would be, if a large bright coal were placed in it. My only remedy is a strong puke. The honey of the wild bee hath no such effects on me. I was very well acquainted with a worthy gentlewoman, of good plain understanding, who had, during her youth, done all she could to sing, but never could utter three notes in tune, until the age of seventy, when she deeply doated, and then became exactly musical, so that she could hum all the common tunes as accurately as any man could perform them on a fiddle. In this state she lived for several years, and night and day did hardly any thing else, but ramble through the house where she lived, humming sometimes one tune, and sometimes another. Nothing ever appeared more unaccountable to me, not by any means, another woman, who seemingly without prejudice to health,

lived twenty-eight days and nights, without any thing passing her lips but air. She was, all this time, not in the least degree indisposed, but chose to live without food. Buchanan, in his history of Scotland, mentions a man, who could do the same, for a much longer time, without inconvenience. Is there not therefore somewhat in the human frame, which may render it for ever, independent of mortal food? The human body was originally intended for an eternal independence of this kind, and will recover it, when the change, made in it by sin and corruption, shall be reversed. As to the longevity of the antediluvians and of the postdiluvians, for some centuries, no species of diet, nor mode of living can in the opinion of physicians, account for it. It is therefore submitted to that learned body, whether their constitutions did not probably undergo, at some time of life, as perhaps every fiftieth year, a periodical fever, similar to the moulting of birds, whereby all the finer vessels, already somewhat obstructed, might be opened and cleansed for a new freedom of circulation and nutrition. A low degree of this, like a ruin of primeval constitution, seems yet to subsist in the human body, and to shew itself in the return of cheerfulness and vivacity during the months of April and May; in some people cutting new teeth at fifty and at a hundred years of age; and particularly in such numbers of men and women marrying about the fiftieth year of their lives, who had laid aside all thoughts of matrimony for some years before. Might not physic take advantage of this critical effort in nature by purgations, alteratives, restoratives, &c. and proper additions of exercise, at these periods? Bleeding and purging in the spring have been long found more conducive to health, than at other seasons of the year; and probably, if buds, leaves, flowers, fruits, were better understood, and successively applied, with judgment, considerable effects might follow. The human body, so subject in old age to capillary obstructions, ossifications, and all sorts of debilities, does not seem to have been fitted for a life of nine hundred years, without some such period as I have hinted. But no one hath thought of giving a like attention to the after-spring of fifty.

112. The mere dread of punishment, like a volcanic blast, can only force a wicked man upward, a little way, and for a very short time; and he soon tumbles down again, like an ignited rock, thrown up from Mount Ætna. He cannot be carried higher, but by some attraction from above, superior to his corrupted nature.

The love of God, and of virtue, which is the will of God, must wing him up to the region of reward, or he sinks for ever. Yet there is hardly any thing else, but fear of punishment, that can introduce him to a distrust and distaste of vice, or begin in him a tendency to virtue. If, however, this tendency is once kindled in him, he rises from the fear of misery, like an electric flame from a volcano, and mounts till he mixes with his new congenial element of ether, in a seraphic love of God; and then he blesses the pangs of his new birth, turning his infant cries into hymns and hallelujahs.

113. In some cases, an argument founded on analogy amounts almost to a demonstration. Such I take to be that of our astronomers, who judge the moon and planets to be inhabited by rational beings; and that there also God is known, adored, and served. It is on the strength of the same analogy, that I almost take for granted the like inhabitation at the bottom of our ocean, which occupies above two-thirds of this our terraqueous globe, and a much greater space and quantity of matter than the whole body of the moon. It would be ridiculous to suppose, that people of other worlds are exactly the same, in every respect with those of this; for instance, if there be no atmosphere about the moon, our nearest neighbour in the solar system, her people must, at least in one respect, differ considerably from us. Why, therefore, there may not be rational animals in the sea, as well as on the land, that is, a species of rational fish, I cannot conceive. It was as easy for the Creator to add an intellectual soul to a kind of fish, as to a kind of land animals. If such there are, analogy here again should teach us to believe, that their bodies are too ponderous to float or subsist in the upper and lighter regions of the water, as ours are, near the upper surface of the atmosphere. Pursuing this analogy, it will follow, that the subaqueous people must know a great deal more of us, than we of them. They frequently see us fighting battles between the sun and them, and ships sinking among them, with thousands of dead men, some entire and others mangled with wounds. This affords them an opportunity of many curious speculations. Query, can they form as high an opinion of our virtue, as of our understandings? It is hard to say, whether some of their philosophers may not have attended a Del Cano, a Drake, or an Anson, round the world. One of their journals, could we come by it, would be worth a million of my books, and equal the Principia of Newton, who

hath waited on the stars, just as they may have watched our ships. Was it Ariosto, or who else (for I forget), that hath written a romance, the scene of which is laid at the bottom of the ocean?

114. A Scotch clergyman, extending his extemporary sermon to an unusual length, and many of his congregation beginning to leave the church, he suddenly digressed from his subject, and said, Stay a little, my beloved, till I tell you the tale I have reserved for the latter part of this discourse. Once on a time, there was an old man, who lived on the side of a wood, and who went out, one day, to cut a wand. Guess, if you can, what use was to be made of the wand? I say a second time, what was to be done with this wand? Since I perceive you cannot answer the question, I will tell you; it was to bang a congregation, that would stay to hear a tale, rather than a sermon. It is my opinion, that this man's sermon, or whatever else he said, must have been very well worth the hearing.

115. Our love of a garden, and the pleasure we take in the improvement of it, are certainly natural to us. Whether it was Sir Francis Bacon, or who it was, I forget, but some one, having observed this love and pleasure, said, man was made for a garden, and a garden for man, so that his taste for gardening is an effort, without his being so far sensible of the instinct, to get back to Paradise. Agriculture is gardening on a larger scale, but dictated by necessity, as that is by pleasure. Necessity and pleasure however are intermixed as motives to both. The analogy between these and the culture of the mind, is strong and beautiful. Our Saviour plans the parable of the sower on agriculture, as Isaiah had that of the vineyard on gardening. Milton, I think, was in the right to employ our first parents as gardeners in Paradise, before their expulsion; and I cannot help being of opinion, that even then, in their state of innocence, their minds required cultivation; and the rather, as we find their Maker took on himself the office of a master-gardener, teaching them what they should eat, and what they should abstain from, and more than this, how to understand what he said to them; and how to express themselves to each other, by the use of language. If some degree of culture was then necessary to them, it became more so to them, and us, their posterity, after an imbecillity of understanding, and a ferocity of passion became the characteristics of their nature. Nay, now the requisite culture demanded the use of somewhat similar to the plough and harrow. The soil was to be broken up

and mellowed, manure was to be brought from a distance, weeds were to be extirpated; rain, dew, and seeds of a benign and nutritive quality were to be sought for from above. For these we must return to our Maker, and for those we must, in a great measure, have continual recourse to our own labour. We must make strong fences against the serpent and beasts of all kinds. We must 'break up the fallow ground' of our corruptions and wicked habits. We must be watchful against the growth of internal thorns and thistles, and against the winged flocks of vain opinions, ever ready to prey upon the good seed, if lying at all uncovered on the highway of this world. The first thing to be done in this work, is to give up our understandings to God and his world; and the next is to subdue our disorderly hearts to the dictates of that word, that our lives may be no longer a course of contradictions to ourselves, nor to the happiness we profess to seek for. Under this management the fruits of faith and obedience may be gathered in abundance, and an entrance into a celestial Paradise laid open to the bearers of these fruits.

116. What are the materials of commerce? A redundancy of staple exportations, especially manufactures. What is the life and soul of manufactures? Good, cheap. What can produce good and cheap manufactures? Industry, frugality, and probity. No art, no cunning can, for any time, give the appearances of these, where these themselves are wanting. That country, which sets up for trade on bad and dear manufactures, must sink into poverty, the sole cure, humanly speaking, for luxury and knavery. Happy curse, administered by the great physician, in a natural and necessary course of things, to a people infatuated, and incapable of any other; a people, who cannot, or will not, be made sensible, that the rest of mankind will not long continue to buy bad things at a dear rate, when they can get good ones at a cheaper.

117. What Doctor Priestly hath published concerning the attraction of water and green vegetables, operating on putrid matter, diffused through the air, ought to carry its truth and utility, into the practice of physic. To him, I believe, we owe this use of green vegetables. But as to water, it hath been a practice for ages, to set tubs of water in rooms newly painted, whereby the noxious smell, at least of the putrescent oil, hath been drawn into the water from the adjacent air. We owe this salutary attraction, as we do every other good, to the Author of nature. The water, if for any time above ground, abounds with an infinity of insects;

and so do all classes of vegetables. Putrefaction is the food, if not the peculiar element of insects; and no vegetables can subsist or grow, without it. The various species of minute insects, I mean, as to the greater number of them, are probably necessary to a system, wherein life is, every where, subsisted by death. The insects therefore must be generated and fed; and for this purpose putrefaction must abound. How far we owe the salubrity of air, water, and of esculent and sanative vegetables, to insects, we do not know; but, as in the main, they are not noxious, we may conclude they are useful; and the rather, because air, strongly impregnated with fiery and sulphureous exhalations, so prejudicial to human health, is probably still more noxious to the life of insects. How far plagues and other epidemic fevers, are owing to immense flights of other insects, enemies to human health and life, which devour our more friendly tribes, and burrow in our bodies, natural philosophy hath not yet been able to discover, though many ingenious writers, Huetius among the rest, have nibbled at the supposition. For my own part, purblind as I am, I cannot see why the Author of nature may not have provided, in nature itself, for the chastisement of a guilty, as well as for the nourishment of a good people. From Africa, the native climate of pestilence, such winged messengers of death may be wafted by a Sirocco, as congenial to their nature, as hurtful to ours, and to that of our little inquiline insects.

118. Our translators of the Bible have given the word *grace*, derived from the Latin word *gratia*, for the original Greek word χαρις, love, or favour, almost every where; for so grace, in their time signified, and still does, excepting in the disputes between Jesuits and Jansenists, between Calvinists and Arminians, with whom it is ignorantly made to stand for the aids of the Holy Spirit, although not more than once in twenty times it is thus to be understood in the Latin or English translations of the holy Scriptures. However, the thing contended for by the Calvinists, is clearly expressed, and fully ascertained by the words, help, strength, comfort, and more especially by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Hence hath arisen among many divines a very difficult question, about the interfering of the Holy Spirit with the moral freedom of man, which hath produced an immensity of volumes, and is still as far from a decision as ever. As in all such arguments, the truth hath been here but little attended to, and an extreme, on either side, is maintained. On one side, it is insisted, that the Holy Ghost forces

the will, and does every thing in the elect. On the other, moral freedom is paramount, and the Holy Ghost is neutral. The word of God vouches for neither of these extravagancies, nor can its temperate and rational reader accede to the one, or the other, of these parties. So far as he knows himself, he is sensible, he can do somewhat in the work of his own salvation, and what he can, he labours to do, fairly judging, that so much is required of him, and freely exerting his little powers in the obedience, dictated to him by his faith. But whereas he soon finds himself unable to accomplish his duty, even up to his own idea of it, by his own efforts, he humbly looks out for, and supplicates superior aid. In this state of mind he is met by the Holy Spirit, and carried up above his infirmities into a more perfect state of freedom, from whence he takes a clearer view of the moral sanctions; of God and heaven on his right hand; of the devil and hell on his left; of the beauty of holiness, and the deformity of vice. Thus it is, that the truth having opened his eyes, and made him free, he emerges out of his former slavery to sin, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. He knows what to choose, and chooses it with all his heart, the Holy Spirit adding vigour and perseverance to his choice. How far he might have been aided in the very first dawnings of his goodness, by the 'light which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world;' or how far the Holy Spirit, in his after-progress, hath braced the nerves of his resolution, and guarded him with the shield of a lively 'faith against the fiery darts of the wicked;' we do not know; nor can he himself know, but by the fruits, that is, by his good deeds. One thing we do know, that, from first to last, he hath not been forced to be a good Christian, which would be the same, as forced to be free, forced to be good, solecisms too absurd to be swallowed by common sense. He was helped, not forced. God admits of no service, but that which is free. The very idea of virtue sickens at compulsion. Of Christian virtue love is the father, and light the mother. Christ hath taught this man as a rational disciple; and, therefore, can never be supposed to expect his conformity to divine instruction, on the footing of a machine. Christ hath died for him, and will not force his gratitude, a thing impossible in nature, and wholly repugnant to every notion of that generous virtue. God alone can draw the interfering line between divine assistance, and the moral liberty of man. We know too little of Him, and ourselves, even to see this line. Let Christian faith,

therefore, leave it to God, as it does every other principle of religion, when it becomes mysterious, that is, when it rises above the capacity of human comprehension. Our salvation cannot be accomplished without divine assistance, for 'all power belongeth unto God;' nor will it ever be accomplished, without our concurrence, for we are commanded to save ourselves, and 'work out our salvation with fear and trembling,' for this very reason, and on this comfortable encouragement, 'because the Lord worketh in us both to will, and to do.' In some sense or degree the virtue of a Christian must be his own, or why is he to be made happy in consequence of it, for, in strictness, we cannot call his happiness a reward? Or, why does he, by imputation, become 'the righteousness of God in Christ,' if his goodness is all his own? Let him choose the right way, pointed out to him by the word, and let him sigh and pant after the happy end, to which it leads; for it is almost all he can do. As to power, whether natural, or adventitious, he hath none, but that which God hath given him, for God is the sole source of power. Here both the Calvinist, and Arminian may ask, why is not sufficient power afforded to all men? And I answer, that God will make no man accountable for more than the right use and improvement of what he hath given him. According as he uses or abuses his moral liberty, he stands justified through the saving merits of Christ Jesus, to which he is entitled by his faith and obedience; or condemned for his non-conformity to the will of Christ, laid open to him in the gospel. The whole controversy must resolve itself into this decision. The saving faith of a Christian, whence originates and springs all his righteousness, is so far voluntary, as it is built on historical faith; to, or from, the evidence of which a man may turn his attention. Christ hath said, to make this a clear point, 'this is the work of God to believe on him whom he hath sent.' Were there no choice in this fundamental degree of faith, there would be no work, no act of the mind; for the evidence to be believed, is afforded to, not produced by, the mind of the believer. It is only on this historical, and original voluntary degree of faith, that the saving and effectual faith of a true Christian is, or can be erected.

119. About the year 1765, and in summer time, several horses died in the adjacencies of Fintona, and county of Tyrone, of a disorder, at first wholly unaccountable to their owners, and the farriers. It was at length perceived, that a vast number of small

flies or insects had nestled in the nostrils of all the horses, and nowhere else; and killed some. These flies were traced, through the same sort of nidus, to a country about twenty miles north of Fintona, and no farther. I made my servant carefully pick one of them from a nostril of one of my own horses, the interior coat of which was lined all round with them. It was large enough to be very visible to the naked eye; I, however, examined it with a moderate magnifier, and found it to be a winged tick. When I was a boy, and accustomed sometimes to sit on the grass, I had observed many exactly such, the wings excepted, which would fasten on my skin, when they could get at it, to suck my blood. The wings of this fly were very small, transparent, and almost circular, sufficient however for the flight of so minute a body when empty, but not to buoy up the tenth part of its weight when brought to me, for its body was then swollen to the size of a middling pin's head with the horse's blood, which shewed its redness, but little diluted, through the transparent skin of the creature's belly. I cured my horses immediately with a mixture of tansy tea, tar, and flour of sulphur, rubbed twice a day into the nostrils of my horses with a brush of hogs' bristles. It was the same composition, with which I had formerly directed them to be well rubbed under the tails, to defend them from the bot-fly in August. As this tick is an animalcule, not taken notice of, that I remember, by any of our naturalists, I thought it not amiss to give some account of it in this farrago of things, especially as it is, and may again be, destructive to one of the noblest and most useful animals of the brute creation. I should have used the juice, rather than a decoction of tansy, as more operative; but I chose to use this herb as a celebrated anthelminthic, and because our flies and insects, of all sorts, seem to avoid it. Whether it produces any sorts of its own, is more than I can pretend to say. If it does, they possibly may be avoided as vermin, noxious to the inhabitants of other plants.

120. If they were Christians (they could be such only in name), who stoned to death Telemachus in the circus for endeavouring to dissuade the gladiators from butchering one another, the remaining people of Sorento were really such, who, when the Turks had sacked their city, and carried off ten thousand of the inhabitants, sold all they had left, and ransomed their fellow-citizens, after the then king of Naples, or the viceroy, had refused the sum demanded. This glorious act of philanthropy happened but about two hundred and thirty years ago.

121. Czar Peter the First, merited the title of Great, not only for his extraordinary political and military abilities, always displayed for the real happiness of his subjects; but for many incidents in his private character, any one of which should set him above Sesostris and Alexander. He saw at the house of one of his nobility a beautiful servant-maid, and there heard an excellent character of her virtue and understanding. Taking her into his own service, he soon perceived that her beauty, brilliant as it was above that of other women, was lost in the superior lustre of her wit and understanding. I will not say, he condescended, but rather, that he soared above other kings, when he married, and raised to his throne this daughter of a peasant, this glory of her sex, and never had reason to repent the deed. His raising Menzicof from the condition of a ballad-singer and a poor basket-boy, as high as the wealth and honours of the empire could carry him, is a similar proof of goodness and greatness in the soul of this extraordinary man. Menzicof was the orphan of a broken gentleman, and had no better way of supporting himself, than that of singing ballads, and selling fruit about the streets, in which occupation the czar happened one day to see him as he was going to a grand dinner with one of his Russian lords. In the kitchen of this very lord young Menzicof served as a scullion, and got his dinner every day, but was allowed, at vacant hours, to make out the remainder of his subsistence by his double employment in the streets. The czar having been struck with somewhat of dignity in the pretty boy's appearance, and seeing him at the door when he stopped, desired he might attend that day at table. Among the many dishes provided for so splendid an entertainment, there was one seasoned up to the czar's particular liking, placed just before his chair, and strongly recommended by the master of the house. Just as the emperor was going to help himself to a plate of this dish, Menzicof forbade him to touch it. Being asked, why? he frankly and boldly declared, that as he was serving in the kitchen, he saw the lord of the house throw somewhat secretly into the mess, while it stood on the fire, and the cook's face was turned away. The czar, observing some confusion in the countenance of his entertainer, ordered a dog to be brought in, and fed on a plate of stuff, taken from the dish in question, which almost instantly threw the poor animal into convulsions, and killed him. A worse animal in the room quickly lost his head, and that of Menzicof was so exalted, as to sit next his sovereign, and to be heard

of all the world over. The Atheist, after saying, the world was made, and is governed by chance, may say too, that this father of the Russian empire was saved by chance, because God did not ocularly appear in the transaction. But the man who sees through his reason, an organ which penetrates deeper and farther than his eye, will trace God from the death of Menzicof's father, through all the streets, and into the kitchen, and into the parlour of the wicked lord; and will see him there, through the genius of Peter, conducting one of the most extensive empires of the world from absolute barbarism into a happy state of culture and civilization. Is a rational creature to believe nothing, but upon the immediate testimony of his senses? Did he see the Almighty actually employed in the work of creation? Or can he see the invisible in that of Providence? Did man see Him in the ascent of the ten thousand Greeks? Did man see Him in the expulsion of the English out of France by a poor country girl? Did he see Him in the restoration of Charles the Second, and of the British constitution by an army, furiously imbittered against both? Or did he see Him, working out the eternal salvation of mankind, on the cross of Christ, even by the malice of the devil and his instruments? If the world was worth his making, why is it not worth his superintendence?

122. That which is now a man, was once nothing; and man as he is, can do nothing but on the strength of the powers, committed to him, whether naturally, or otherwise, by the Author of his being, and committed in a very limited manner. If somewhat more is given to one man than to another, he should not boast of his little talent, as if he had not received it. After all, between the greatest genius that ever lived, and the capacity of the most stupid mortal, that could be called rational, the difference was more minute, than between a cat and a mouse. I know nothing that ought so thoroughly to humble the vanity of him, who values himself on his understanding, as philosophy. Undoubtedly the leaders in philosophy, were among the foremost genii of our species. And yet, what was the atomical concourse of the Epicureans, the fatalism of the Stoics, the scepticism of the Pyrrhonists, the plenum of the Cartesians, the atheism of the Materialists, and the circular polygon of the Newtonians, but madness, and the drivel of dotage? Yet this humiliating reflection may be carried a great deal farther; for, notwithstanding the enjoyment of more than natural and human lights, the tergiversation of Balaam, the

idolatry of Solomon, the treachery of Iscariot, and the prevarication of Peter, should throw down our pride on the dust, out of which we were taken. But have I no pride myself in thus censuring others of much greater abilities than I can boast of? This question of my own, I confess, frightens me, and leaves me no other answer but this, that I acknowledge the great superiority, in point of understanding, above mine, of the persons I have censured; that I have summoned their extravagancies to the test of common sense; and that my impeachment of them is before the tribunal of God himself, the King and guardian of us simple ones, whom they have laboured to distract and pervert. If my vanity hath, in some degree, prompted me to fall foul on theirs, I beseech God to extirpate that vanity from my heart, and to forgive it. The Holy Spirit, speaking to me by St. Paul, and the petulance of men calling themselves philosophers, in their attempts on Christianity, have excited in me a jealousy, for which I will not ask their pardon, lest, if I did, I should remain unpardonable in the sight of God.

123. The distinction of sexes in the human species, as to the ordinary carriage and mien of each, is so exceedingly characteristic, that even after they have been polished to the utmost, the marble of the man ought to be known from the diamond of the woman. To say a man looks like a woman, or a woman like a man, is still expressively opprobrious. The manly character prevails among a brave and warlike people; the female among the polite. Peace, commerce, wealth, and the fine arts, together with luxury, the constant attendant of these, soften the men by degrees into the latter character; and, at first, that character hath an amiable appearance in the rougher sex; but, in its farther progress, degenerates into a despicable vice. This change became notable in the Roman people quickly after the conquest of Carthage, and the influx of wealth from Asia. The debauchery of manners into which it had run, at the time when Juvenal wrote his sixth satire, gave him occasion to chastise it with the two finest lines in all the classical authors.

> Nos patimur longæ pacis mala; sævior armis
> Luxuria incubuit, victumque ulciscitur orbem.
>
> Now all the mischiefs of a lasting peace
> We Romans feel, and dread the dire increase;
> Now luxury more cruel than our wars,
> And more destructive than our civil jars,
> With gilded ruin in contagious hands,
> Just vengeance for a conquer'd world demands.

Here, in two lines, the decline of the Roman empire is truly and elegantly accounted for by a Roman then living in Rome. Mr. Gibbon, as it seems, affects to forget that wealth and luxury were the real causes of the decline, and would need insinuate a charge on Christianity as productive of that effect, which, in truth, for some centuries it helped to prevent, by stemming the growth of luxury, and its horrible brood of vices. But had it actually destroyed the Roman empire, could any thing have been more to its honour? for what had the Romans, from first to last been, but the cut-throats, robbers, and oppressors of mankind? Having swept into their own rapacious hands all the wealth of the nations they subdued, and continuing still to fleece them to the last farthing, nothing surely could have been so meritorious, in regard to the rest of mankind, as the ruin of this band of robbers and murderers, in whom the worst sort of superstition coinciding, as is natural, with a thirst of blood and plunder, had given them an extensive dominion over nations more pacific than themselves. How successfully afterward was their example followed by the Arab Mahomed! Such were the Romans, maugre all the daubings of their historians and poets, in the judgment of every candid antiquarian. Yet, it seems Gibbon would rather all religion were banished out of this world, than that 'this iron kingdom,' which 'broke to pieces and subdued all things,' should have itself been broken. The fall however of antichrist approaches, 'when the stone, cut out of the mountain without hands,' shall roll down upon its remains, still subsisting, 'on seven hills,' and 'grind them to powder.' These Romans were the people who formerly bruised, and have since 'bewitched the nations.' They had no sooner got rid of all their rivals in power, and accumulated, through oceans of blood, the riches of almost all mankind, than they gave themselves up to the most enormous excesses of luxury, and vices of all kinds. By these the once hardy robbers were, in process of time, so enervated and enslaved, that the northern nations found them an easy prey. Thus fell the Roman empire. But long before its fall, on the introduction of Christianity, it found a new occasion to exercise its superstition, and its cruelty, on the professors of that religion. On these, who aimed at no other character than that of innocent and patient sufferers, it gave a loose to its fury in more than ten bloody persecutions, continued for three hundred years. Cowardly Romans! And all this in support of the most despicable and abominable gods. Stupid, barbarous Romans! They murdered the Christians

by thousands, for no other reason, but because they were rationally pious and good men. Infernal Romans! Gibbon would insinuate, that Christianity corrupted the Roman empire; whereas all men know, that it was the empire that corrupted the church, by imparting a share of its ill-gotten wealth, and with it its own luxurious degeneracy. Then it may be said with truth,

> Christe, tuis misere ditatis, sævior uncis,
> Ignibus et crucibus, minitanteque dente lonis,
> Luxuria incubuit, victamque est ulta gehennam.
>
> Now luxury the church of Christ attacks,
> With worse than crosses, gibbets, lions, racks;
> With a bewitching and infernal spell
> She vengeance takes for lately conquer'd hell.

But, it is objected that the primitive Christians would not fight. Fight! For what? For a band of cut-throats? For their bitter enemies and persecutors? Of all the systems of virtue ever published, that of Christianity is indisputably the most pacific, the most perfect and powerful. Gibbon himself (no thanks to him for it) hath applauded the Christians of the two first centuries as, by far, the best people the world had ever known. But he takes care to intimate, that they chose to suffer rather than to fight, insinuating a want of courage in these best of men. Did their martyrs betray any symptom of this want? Or did Scipio, Cæsar, Pompey, ever exhibit such genuine proofs of heroism? And if they did not fight, it should be remembered they were not called to it. But they would not fight. Granted, for 'their master's kingdom was not of this world.' What indeed, I repeat it, should such men fight for? Was it for the support of a political system, originally founded by robbers, and carried up, all along, by plunder, murder, devastation, and tyranny? Or to maintain the cause of gods, as wicked as their worshippers? If in after times, when they came to share the wealth, and fell into the luxury and effeminacy of a body grown unwieldy and consumptive, it cannot be ascribed to their religion, which by all its principles disowned and condemned them as, at once, professors and apostates. The reflections of this enemy upon our religion, if rightly understood, are rather panegyrical than invective, howsoever he intended them. But his account of Rome, plundered by the Huns, ought to be carefully read and noted by a people debauched by wealth, in principle and practice, as we are, and almost as ripe for divine vengeance, as the Romans then were.

124. In the year 1748, I happened at Chester to find a German, who by some management of his wind-pipe imitated all sorts of singing birds so exquisitely, that only by his bulk, and want of feathers, was it possible to distinguish him from the canary-bird, black-bird, thrush, &c. which he mimicked. While he was doing this, his lips were only so far open as to admit the back of a worn table-knife. I felt the vibrations in his wind-pipe, but I think not more sensibly than in my own, when I raise my voice a little. When he ceased to be a bird, he asked me if I would hear a concert of dogs, and another of cats? It is true, friend, I do think those animals do mean somewhat like our concerts, for I have frequently listened to those of dogs, and once to a concert of cats. I think myself happy, quoth the German, to have met at last with one who hath observed the fact. Saying this, he threw himself down behind a great table, and a single howl came forth, exactly like that I had been used to hear. This solo continued but about a minute, and was followed by a chorus of at least ten howls, as of so many dogs. After two or three repetitions of these solos and choruses, he performed the same in the cat fashion; and so very well in both, that the animals themselves could not have performed better, had all their mistresses been to hear their serenades. The dogs then fell upon the cats, and all was barking, mewing, spitting, scratching. I should have mentioned, that the concert of cats, whether as an exhibition of their own, or of this their representative, was the most horrible sound I had ever heard, nearly the same, I believe, that would have come from a dozen little children, each possessed by a demon. A practice, like those above, is said to obtain among the Belzebub baboons in Terra Firma, where great numbers of them frequently meet in the woods, when one standing up on an eminence, seems to make a speech, and the rest to sit and listen until he hath done, on which the whole audience join in such a scream, as human ears cannot bear without an inexpressible shock. The Chinese, a people the most early polished in the world, can no more be pleased with our music, nor we with theirs, than either of us can with that of dogs, cats, or baboons, yet on both sides we are delighted with our own. So are the Hottentots with their iambic of trim-tram. Is music then arbitrary and customary only? Or is ours the dictate of nature? This point should be cleared up by the philosophers of sound. At least, the Æolian harp should be allowed to produce some-

thing more than mere melody, till our present silly jingle shall be taught to speak to the heart, and mean somewhat. If there is harmony (as the adepts in music call it) to be found in this jingle, it can be harmony only for the ear, and the pleasing unisons of an Æolian harp should be preferred to it, call either by what name we will. But query is there any essential rule of musical composition, as there is in universal grammar?

125. Cybele, otherwise called Vesta, and Terra, the earth, was worshipped, not only by the Greeks and Romans, but by many of the northern nations, as the mother of the gods. It seems, they owned their gods to be earth-born, as well as the giants, the enemies of those gods. The Romans, already somewhat acquainted with several of her children, by the wise advice of an oracle, sent to Pergamus for her; and when she arrived found her to be a shapeless stone, and according to some ancient author (I forget whom) of enormous size. It was not long however until they represented her by the figure of a woman, crowned with turrets and battlements, as the earth should be, and under this semblance adored her. The barbarous nations, not acquainted with sculpture, continued to worship mother earth as before, by a large piece of the earth, that is, a rock or huge stone, detached from the rest of the globe. I suspect we have many of these goddesses in Ireland. At least I have been shewn several of them, which were worshipped in old times as divinities, if we may believe a uniform tradition of the native Irish. Of these one is to be seen near Newry of so great a bulk, that Jupiter, and almost all his Olympic family, might have been brought out of her in a Cæsarean operation by an obstetrical statuary. The tradition acquaints us, that some of these were, as late as the present century, found so nicely balanced on a stone prop or pivot, as to be easily shook by the hand of an ordinary man, though not farther moveable than about half an inch, by the strength of five hundred men. This served for a miracle, superior, I believe, to any exhibited by her children to attract adoration. Any very large object, the expanse of the ocean, or a very high mountain, is apt to strike the beholder with wonder, which is not far distant from a degree of veneration. The effect of this was aimed at by Nebuchadnezzar at Babylon, and by Lysippus, or a scholar of his, at Rhodes. After tossing little stones here and there in play, the sight of one as large as a house, and of a weight so far exceeding our utmost endeavours to move it, espe-

cially however if easily moved, though ever so little, enhances the wonder, and may be made to excite the adoration of a very ignorant and superstitious mind. Although the poor native Irish now despise their stupidity, who could kneel to a mishapen rock, the work of God, yet they still readily fall down before a stone Mary, or Peter, of little size, which they know to be the work of a man only. Anterior to all inscriptions, and I believe to all knowledge of letters, at least in Ireland, forts, or earthen fortifications, abounded every where throughout that country ; as do artificial barrows, or monuments of the dead, probably of much earlier date than the forts. These latter were erected as monuments over the burnt bones of the very greatest men ; while bones of men ranking in a second class, enclosed in urns of pottery, were deposited in the earth, and over each urn was placed a rude stone, as large as the friends of the deceased could roll to the spot of interment. The lower and poorer people were all buried unburnt in the earth, as now. The barrow erected over Halyattes in Lydia by his son Cræsus, is the greatest I have read of, in height about four hundred perpendicular feet, and emulating the pyramids of Egypt in every thing, but materials. These sorts of monuments are traced northward throughout all the countries, peopled by the posterity of Gomer. This rude kind of structure speaks its own antiquity, as prior to all inscriptions and records. The language of the old Irish, of considerable similarity with the Hebrew, noted by the very learned colonel Vallancey, together with the aforesaid monuments, support the idea of their kindred with Gomer ; nor is it at all incredible, that a people, living detached from the rest of mankind till about six hundred years ago, should have better preserved a tincture of the original language than any other people, more exposed to conquest, and more jumbled with neighbouring nations by commerce, or any other kind of intercourse. The Montgomeries, once possessed of large estates in France, and as Vandals, in Barbary, have preserved entire in their own the name of their great ancestor Gomer. An Irish lady of that name, having very fairly traced her family up to Gomer in a chat with one of my acquaintances of another name, was bid to stop there. Why, pray, said she ? Because, madam, replied he, if you go but two steps higher I shall be of as noble a family as your ladyship, and will actually call you cousin at least. If the antiquarians do not think my other Irish antiquities worth their notice, they ought at least to

take the Montgomeries into their particular attention. The herald's office more especially ought maturely to weigh the matter, because probably the Montgomeries have a right to priority among mankind, for as Gomer was undoubtedly the eldest son of Japhet, so the greater part of our most learned critics and commentators insist upon it, that Japhet was the eldest son of Noah. The Jews have no claim to this priority, for they are descended from the younger son of Isaac, and Isaac from Arphaxad, who was but the third son of Shem.

126. About the year 1768, a six-year old bullock was slaughtered in Dublin after the usual manner, that is, knocked down and blooded. The raw flesh of this beast (I saw some of it) was every where as white as good veal. The blood was thrown away by the butcher, and not microscopically examined, so that it could not be known, whether it abounded with red globules as plentifully as the blood of other oxen. Though the Jews, I believe, do not knock down their beeves, as we do, but bleed them to death, in order the more perfectly to clear the flesh of the blood, yet I have never heard that their beef, newly killed, is of so pale a colour; nor can I think, that the minuter muscular vessels of any full grown animal, can by any mode of bleeding, be so entirely exhausted of this fluid, as to leave it colourless. But the point may be easily tried by killing and dressing a bullock in the Jewish manner. At present it seems to me most reasonable to suppose, that as wooden vessels are tinged with the colours of such liquors, as have been long enclosed, or passed through them, in like manner, the muscular membranes of a full grown animal, by the incorporation or adhesion of the red globules, must have acquired their colour in a much higher degree, than the same sort of membranes in a calf of only six or seven weeks old; and in this opinion I am the more confirmed, because there is a like difference in point of colour between the flesh of a lamb and of a wether, both blooded to death in the manner of the Jews. It is true the difference, though considerable, is not so great between the flesh of a sucking pig and that of a hog; but this may be owing to the smaller impregnation of red globules in the blood of the latter, killed at a year old, than in those of a bullock, killed at six, and of a wether at four. Besides, it may be possible, for aught I know, that the blood of swine may never be so highly thus impregnated, as that of the other two species, or their fibres and membranes, so susceptible of that impregnation.

127. It is a current report, but on what authority grounded, I know not, that three hundred lewd women were, like other stores, shipped aboard the Royal George, sunk near Portsmouth; and that the divers, who went down to rummage the wreck, found them and the sailors in pairs. Whosoever believes this, ought always to remember, that God is on land as well as at sea; and that if here he hath water, there he hath fire at all times ready, as an instrument of justice and vengeance. I doubt however the truth of this ugly report, as it is rather too wicked for credibility; as that ship, I am told, was overset in the daytime; and as the divers could not have been at leisure to make the observation above-mentioned.

128. A miser is one, who, in respect of vanity and sensuality, is more mortified than an anchoret, and what he denies himself, he is still farther from allowing to others. 'He heaps up riches, without knowing or caring who shall gather them,' when he dies. His vice is the most abstracted, the most ideal, and refined of all vices. There is another sort of miser, much more sensible than this, who heaps up money, with large stores of victuals and clothing; and, for fear of thieves and robbers, intrusts both with a parcel of poor agents, not suspected by any sort of plunderers to possess the prey they look for. These agents, by sale or barter, on very moderate brokerage, bring in to the miser I am speaking of, a profit, with which nothing else in commerce can come into competition. The miser, whom they serve, sees them every day airing his stores, and preventing all sorts of insects and moths from damaging his meat and clothes, and at long run he receives his money, exchanged into the currency of a better world than this, so as to carry it with him beyond the grave.

129. There is a certain set of words, such as bigotry, latitudinarianism, superstition, and fanaticism, employed mostly in matters of religion, and flung by sects and parties at one another, as terms of reproach. Thus used, they are nothing else but the random shots of poisoned arrows and chewed bullets, from the engines of ill-nature and malice. All of them, however, when rightly adapted, imply somewhat culpable, and often criminal. Bigotry is a zeal without knowledge, a tenaciousness of opinions, ill founded, and warmly pursued to excess, even to hatred and persecution. Truths, of all sorts, ought to be espoused by a rational mind; and, if they are of the last consequence to human duty or happiness, they cannot be espoused with too great warmths;

but can never tend to the detriment of any one, if this leading truth is embraced with warmth proportionable to its beauty and importance, namely, that charity is the first of Christian duties. The true Christian reasons for the fundamental principles of his religion (those I mean which he takes to be such) with all the force of his understanding, but shews, at the same time, that all the warmths of his heart go out in love to the man he is addressing. No spice of acrimony is employed by him; but in regard to such deceivers as labour to pervert and corrupt the principles of simple and well-meaning people, whom he endeavours to guard against their artifice. The deceiver hath nothing left for it, but to call this reasoner a bigot, because he is firm in defence of a divine truth. Into this odious extreme however he will be apt to run, if he is not very careful to temper his warmth with that 'meekness and fear,' wherewith his principles oblige him to 'answer every man that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him.' Latitudinarianism is that indifference to all religion, which qualifies a man to espouse, or repudiate, any principle or sort of religion, without much caring whether it is well or ill founded. A hereditary bigot is not more blindly attached to the opinions infused into him by a wrong education, than the silly child of vanity, rigidly adhering, as he thinks, to new notions in religion, though but licking up the exploded drivel of old heretics. What room for vanity is there in thus servilely borrowing errors! How much less in one of the clergy, who not only contents himself with being, in like manner, a fool at second hand, but shews himself to be a knave too of the worst kind, by entertaining and covertly insinuating such principles, as he himself hath condemned by his public professions! The latitudinarian, near akin to the sceptic, paying little or no regard to reason, or the word of God, will tell you, that God loves variety of religions among mankind, as if all were equally false or insignificant; and that he will not at the last day ask any man what religion he was of. It is true, he will not, because he knows it already. But it does not follow, that one religion is not better than another, nor that there is not one, better than all the rest, which every man that had an opportunity of judging ought to have chosen, and therefore is accountable for his choice, or for his having made none. This dissembler would needs palm on us his indifference to all religion for an enlargedness of mind. But if his line is longer than ours, it is only made so by its curvature, which leads him this way and that with-

out end, and without fixing him any where. He may truly call himself a bigot to nothing, for, if he believes himself, he hath no principle, and hardly an opinion. There is another, and a wiser sort of man than this, who tries all things, and, by God's blessing, holds fast that which is right. This man hath the use of his senses, and the reason God hath given him. In a due exercise of these he finds little trouble in the search of religious truth. His candour and honesty throw the truths of religion open to him, insomuch that, aided by the word of God, he throws both his understanding and heart open to them, and justifies his choice of principles by as steady an adherence to it, as the bigot does to his, which were perhaps but entailed upon him by an ignorant father, and riveted by an inveterate habit. Though his principles, as certainly they do, point out to him the reduction of his appetites and passions, and a degree of mortification and self-denial, he cheerfully obeys, and trusts God with the consequences. He hates no man for thinking in a different manner from himself; but is ever ready to oblige and serve all men, as far as opportunity occurs, and integrity will permit. Among mankind there is not a more amiable nor a more illustrious character than his. He hath but one thing to guard against, and that is, the danger of sitting too loose as to religion, which a mind once afloat, as his was, may still give in to, as agreeable to the happy liberty he hath so successfully indulged, if the wind of new doctrine, or the current of fashionable opinions, should attempt to carry him away. Superstition, the foible of weak minds, consists in laying too great a stress on trifles, or things foreign to religion. In such minds the infinite importance of religion itself is apt to communicate some share of its own weight and dignity to all its circumstances, and to every thing, that but seems to second its good purposes, to raise its ardours, or promote its effects. In this light, superstition looks like the harmless, but simple child of religion, and passes unsuspected, till, grown up to a degree of strength, it steals the reins from its mother's hands, and drives her out of the house. It begins with observations on spilling salt, on meeting a red haired woman in the morning, on the flight of a bird; but proceeds to an adoration of the moon, and to offer human sacrifices to a fancied deity. This at least is throwing religion off its strong hinges, and giving it those of wire or packthread; but, in its farther progress it throws away the doors themselves, and lays the house open to whim, instead of principle, after which there is no

extravagance so wild or wicked, that may not find an entrance, and assume an absolute sway. Hence it may come to pass, that ghosts, hobgoblins, and ideal devils, the forerunners and brokers of a real one, have been believed in, have been imprecated, have been consulted, as powers that know every thing, and could do every thing. Opposite to a mind so wretchedly groveling, there is another, of high and wide capacity, that having by a right use of reason and a continual application to revealed religion, filled itself with objects, of magnitude immense, hath left itself neither room, nor time, for an attention to trifles. These hardly weigh as the lightest dust on its balance. Its greatest condescension is to astronomy. With systems, suns, and worlds, it sometimes amuses itself, and then only because they are the works of God. To him, to the eternal world, and to the road thither through Christ Jesus, it devotes itself in such a manner, that other things, as too minute for consideration, are lost to its meditations. A creating, a governing, a redeeming, a sanctifying God engages its gratitude, fires its love, confirms its faith, trust, hope, and by its goodness excites its wonder more than by all the demonstrations of wisdom and power displayed throughout the universe. In self-abasement this mind draws near to Christ, and through 'him, the way, the truth, and the life,' struggles upward to the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. Folly, sin, and time, are left behind, and eternity strains the eye of faith, till every thing below disappears, and retires from attention. This mind meddles not with the mysteries of Divine Nature, but with those only of its mercy, patience, love; and is not at leisure to quarrel with other men about ceremonies, or metaphysical refinements, or the senseless whims of heretics, or the refractory spirit of schismatics. He is indeed engaged in a sharp controversy; but it is with himself, as a sinner, and with the devil, the world, and his own fleshly lusts, as the enemies of God, and his poor soul. In this he watches with all the severity, prays with all the ardour, and fights with all the vigour, that God hath given him. Having drawn this short character of a true Christian, it will be easily seen, wherein the fanatic, the enthusiast, the zealot, differ from him, and are culpable. The fanatic believes, or would have others believe, that he is divinely inspired: and we shall believe that he really is, and that extraordinarily, as soon as he proves it by working miracles, as the apostles of Christ did. But no volubility in praying or preaching, especially with a mixture of nonsense; no shaking, no falling into

fits, or dancing; no bitter railing; no splitting or dividing the church of Christ, can ever prove any thing like it, but must prove the very reverse; as must also, in a still stronger manner, the advancement of opinions and practices contrary to, or not authorized by, the word of God. If the sacraments instituted by Christ, and the peace and charity of the church, placed by him and the Holy Spirit, as among the first fundamentals of our holy religion, are, in the smallest degree, slighted by any sect, that sect is not of God. There is not, there cannot be a clearer demonstration than this. So infinitely important and interesting are the principles of our divine religion, that it is utterly impossible to be too zealously affected towards it. No feelings of the most grateful heart can ever rise in warmth, equal to the demand made on it by a dying Saviour. No zeal, no enthusiasm can carry the human heart too far, or too high, for the acknowledgment of such goodness. Let no man therefore call him, by way of reproach, a zealot or enthusiast, who cheerfully gives his life on the rack, or in flames, in return for that God who shed his blood for him on the cross, for he repays but a little for that which is immense; a trifle not his own, for that which Christ held in property. But this enthusiasm, this zeal should be 'according to knowledge.' If our own vanity or our worldly interest, or our prejudice, or our attachment to a sect or party, hath any share in it, so far it is but base hypocrisy; and it had been even better for us to have classed with the Laodiceans, perhaps with the infidels. Blessed Jesu! Thou hast offered up thy blood to redeem us from the torments of hell; thou hast entitled us to the joys of heaven. We are thine by creation, by redemption, by sanctification; what then have we of our own? Nothing, but a will and a heart, a vagrant will, and a corrupted heart, which, without thy influence, can hardly be said to be at our own disposal. Poor offerings indeed, if brought to thy altar, unless they flame up in gratitude and love! Yet if they should, what would that be to thy pity, and thy love for us, which drew thee from the glories of heaven to the infamy of the cross? Our warm and steady adherence to the saving truths of thy religion, instead of stirring us up to any degree of animosity against such as differ from us concerning those truths, inspires us with pity for their errors, and charity towards themselves, for this is one of those most sacred truths to which we adhere, that we should love all men, and particularly all that call themselves by thy name, howsoever imperfectly they make good their title to

that glorious name, in the midst of sincerity and honest dealing. Thy prayer on the cross for them, who knew not what they did, when they murdered thee, is more than a sufficient direction to us for our behaviour towards men, who as little know what they ought to believe.

130. Our Saviour tells us, that God knows better what we stand in need of than we do ourselves, and therefore orders our words to be few, and our prayers short, when we address ourselves to the majesty of heaven. We ourselves ought to consider, how little good it is, that we deserve at the hands of God. These considerations lead to modesty and brevity in our devotions, which ought ever to be preceded by meditation. The above serve for reasons in the minds of some infidels, for not praying at all. With these that other precept of our Saviour, to pray always, passes for nothing. It is much that they allow his doctrine to be just and right, when it seems to fall in with their own way of thinking. But may not our prayers be short and comprehensive, and yet frequently offered up? It is most true that God knows our wants much better than we do. This is not a reason why we ought not to be sensible of our own wants, of our great inability to supply them, and our continual dependence on him alone who can do it. Hence it is that 'prayer should be made ever unto the great Provider and Helper,' and that He 'ought daily to be praised for' being 'always more ready to hear, than we to pray.' All our addresses to the throne of mercy should be founded on a profound submission to his infinite wisdom; should not be offered by way of information or direction to him, but purely as representations of our wants and weakness, and of a humble sense in us of both. He that hath not this sense, is become a god of his own making, sets up for independence, and if left to his own presumption, must surely perish. To the Fountain of all goodness and power, the weak creature should continually pray, that he may be made stronger; the wicked creature should incessantly cry, that he may be converted; and the good creature, if such there is among mankind, should constantly solicit that he may become better. Not one of these can help himself; the world is more ready to corrupt, than aid him; and the devil is on the watch utterly to destroy him. What then can he do, but turn himself to God, ever present with him, ever full of pity for him, and mighty to save him? Cut off prayer, the sweet and comfortable communication between God and him, and he is lost for ever. This wretched

being is not less accountable nor less helpless, for not thinking himself so. How much happier is the devout dependant of God, who hath infinite wisdom to direct him; infinite power to protect and support him; infinite goodness to infuse itself into his self-diffident heart, until it become a heart after God's own heart! At the age of twenty, and in the dog-days, I was taken out of my bed one morning, by three or four young creatures like myself to a kind of exercise common in the country where I then lived, and received a blow with a cannon-ball, which fractured my scull. This, and the evacuations necessary to prevent a fever at that season, left me in a low state of health and spirits. This again left me, instead of a most hale and animated, a shattered and debilitated constitution for the remainder of my life. On recollecting that this affliction fell on me that sole day, since I was eight years old, whereon I had not recommended myself in prayer to the protection of Providence, I drew a lesson for which, dearly as it was purchased, I bless God to this day. Let those (I fear there are many) who expose themselves to such dangers, without prayer, and escape them, not dare to draw from thence an argument for indevotion or infidelity, till the winding up of their trial, and the settlement of their mode of existence for ever. At that period I verily believe, my correction will be found to have the advantage of their escapes, howsoever more capable they may think themselves, and really have been, of leading good lives, without such chastisements, than I was. Somewhat similar to my case, as above related, but of an infinitely more dreadful nature, was that of Origen, than whom a greater genius never adorned the Christian world, on going out one day without having, by prayer in the morning, put himself under the protection of Divine Providence. The lamentation, after his fall, recorded in his own words by an ancient ecclesiastical historian, is a picture of woe, if possible, more affecting and more shocking than even those of Jeremiah; but his case, in regard to a particular circumstance, is not so proper as mine, to be exposed to the eye of a common reader, or I should here give it at full length. Bishop Hall, a writer abounding with admirable sentiments, maintains, that prayer is a universal remedy for evils of all sorts. If I forget not, he insists more on its curative than preventive powers, the latter being less apparent, and therefore less capable of being dwelt on. But who would not rather be saved, than relieved, from evils, particularly the evil of sin? Yet it is here that prayer performs its noblest work,—

here the great Benefactor conceals his protecting hand, and prevents our acknowledgments. Could we see how many and how great miseries the power of prayer, prevailing with Providence, averts from us, our gratitude would be more awakened, than by all the reliefs we enjoy from evils actually suffered. An attentive Christian sometimes catches at these, and gets a glimpse of the protecting hand, as it is drawn back from his unwary head. Faith ought, in this case, to interpose, and teach us how much oftener our prayers have been heard, than creatures, so blind, are apt to conceive. That the unseen blessings of God are more than the visible, not only our faith, but the knowledge of our miserable weakness, and of the hourly dangers we are ever surrounded with, should convince us, and guide us to a degree of gratitude, which we are little aware of. We are fed, we are clothed, we are healed, we are delivered out of prison; these blessings are visible, though they too often pass by our observation as things of course; but how do we know, whether these temporal blessings are not all turned by our own folly and wickedness into so many curses? And, at the best, what are they to the maintenance of piety, virtue, and eternal life in the soul? Who feeds these in the soul? God. What prevails with him to do it? Prayer, almighty prayer; for the power of prayer is as the power of God. If by frequent, which approaches to continual, meditation and prayer, the soul opens and applies itself to God, like fruit ripening under the solar influence, that soul improves in piety and virtue under the celestial irradiation, till it acquires a purity and sublimity, similar to those of the Divine Being. The source of good, continually called in, illapses into the soul and heart, and drives out before it all folly and wickedness, which it soon replaces with the wisdom and love, wherein consists the true life of a Christian. The piety of prayer, and the foulness of sin; the great God, and the foul fiend, can never dwell together in the same mind. This is that exorcism, which is wrought in every wicked man, when he becomes a true Christian. Thus dies the old man, and thus revives the new, in one and the same person; and this happy change is owing, so far as the person himself is employed in the operation, to a perseverance in warm and earnest prayer. If we fail not on our part, the infinitely gracious Being will never fail on his. He must cease to be God and good, before he will relinquish a soul thus devoted to him. And thus it is habituated to a self-renunciation, and finds a better self in Jesus, the way, the truth, and

the life; the way to the Father of mercies; the truth of solid wisdom; and the life which knows no end. In this great affair of devotion, we must never forget, that thankfulness for our former success in prayer is all that is in us, which can ensure the grant of what we now or hereafter may petition for; and, therefore, that thanksgiving is the very soul of devotion. Nor are we ever to forget, that the wise God is not to be put off with words only. The praises of God must come from the heart, or they are but words; and God judges of our hearts by our actions. One good deed goes farther with him than ten thousand words, or why are our hands lifted up in prayer? On the other side, an evil deed negatives our solicitations. 'The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.' Herein is no prohibition to the prayers of a sinner, which would be no other than a prohibition to all the prayers of mankind, for all are sinners, but only to the prayers of such as are hardened in sin, and perhaps rather glory in their wickedness, than feel that compunction which may introduce them into a better course of life. Prayer, however, as it petitions for the greatest of all blessings at a time when we deserve nothing at God's hands but the severity of his judgments, to be successful, ought to be very warm and earnest. How can we hope, that God should attend to our words, if we do not attend to them ourselves? Who God is, and who we are, should be well considered, before we kneel down, that our solicitations may ascend with all the warmth and emotion of lightning. And, after all, a firm faith in the mercy of God, through the merits and intercessions of our Saviour, is necessary to our praying at all, for it is only 'in and through this our High Priest,' that we can justify our 'boldness in approaching the throne of grace. No man cometh to the Father, but by him.' It is only by the atonement made by him for us, that we cease to be abominable in the sight of God. It is only through the imputation of his righteousness to us, that we can become righteous in the sight of infinite holiness, or be at all accepted.

131. About 1760, in summer time, riding to a gentleman's house in the county of Fermanagh, and a moderate breeze blowing through a well grown fir-grove, the strongest stench I ever perceived of putrefying carrion came from thence, and diffused itself all around the dwelling, and through the house. A hundred rotten carcases to the windward could not have annoyed us more. Inquiry having been made by the gentleman concerning the carrion,

from whence he supposed this most offensive smell to proceed, a sensible servant said, the stench does not proceed from any carrion, but from a very great number of mushrooms, growing in the fir-grove. With this servant I went to examine this odd production, and saw a number of fungi, the stalks of which stood above the ground about five or six inches high, and the upper end of each stalk looked exactly as if the stalk had been inverted, and dipped about two inches into a vessel of tar. From this dark coloured part alone the bad smell issued; and, on that account, I called it the carrion mushroom. I take it for granted, this dark and fetid stuff had formed the head of the plant, which now in its putrescent state hung down, and covered the upper part of the stalk. As I never before, nor since, saw, heard, or read of any such species of fungus, I mention it here as a curiosity, which ought to find a place in natural history. If it hath been ever observed by others, it must be that which hath been called by the name of Potirone by the Burgundians, or Phallus. It is not to be wondered at, that I did not admit a phenomenon to a very close inspection, which was so extremely disagreeable, and might be dangerous. The gentleman, at whose house I had been a visiting, ordered his servants to go out with spades, and throw earth upon the offensive plants; which they immediately did, and we were relieved. Neither before this, nor after, was any the like stench perceived about that place.

132. Some years before this, I was shewn in a garden near Monaghan, several very luxuriant plants of what they there call Scotch cale, on a single leaf of which, and from the middle length of the great rib, a new plant, exactly like that which bore it, had sprung up and put forth several leaves, like, but not altogether so large, as those of the mother plant.

133. I have had, in a little collection of natural curiosities, at least two-thirds of a human Tibia, turned into leather by lying (how long I cannot guess) at the bottom of a turf-bog on a stratum, I believe, of limestone. Its colour is that of tanned leather, and its pliancy, though so long kept dry, nearly equal to the pliancy of ben-leather, or that which is used in making the soles of men's shoes. This transformation makes it, I think, probable, that muscles, tendons, cartilages, and bones, consist of vessels nearly the same, but bound together, in the progress and order here intimated, by transverse ligaments, still more and more numerous and firm, till the muscle grows into a bone. Perhaps wood is no other

than the bone of a tree. Be this as it will, the calcareous stone, on which the Tibia happened to lie having consumed, or broken the finer transverse ligaments of the bone (as putrid water does those of flax), and ejected the putrescent matter of the bone, laid its pores open to the particles of bark, leaves, buds, &c. whereof our bogs were at first chiefly composed; and, by those means, gave it a kind of natural tannage, similar to the artificial, or rather, the very same. This little piece of theory may lead to that ossification in the gullets, and the mouths of the great arteries in very old men. If any one should lime, wash, and tan a piece of purely muscular flesh, fresh killed, as tanners do their hides, an easy experiment, and that piece of flesh should be converted into a sort of tanned leather, this conjecture might be verified, but if confuted, the result might be worth the trying. This moment it occurs to me, that the experiment is often, though undesignedly made by the little scraps of flesh left by the butchers, here and there, on the insides of their hides, which the curriers find tanned into leather, as well as the hides, to which they adhere. N. B. The cutis of an animal is really muscular.

134. In my collection there is also a lump of butter, found in a turf-bog, and turned into a substance like starch, so as that it may be easily crumbled between the fingers into a white and dry powder, and yet melts at the warmth of candle almost as readily as common butter. The old Irish held strong butter as delicious, for which reason, they frequently wrapped up a great quantity of butter in the bark of a tree, and buried it in a bog; where after it had lain for some time, it was raised to their palates. That which I have, must have lain in the situation mentioned for some ages, and was either forgotten by the epicure who intended to have regaled himself with it, or left to others who had killed him, to be taken up and eaten, if they should happen to find it.

135. I have the thigh-bone of a hen, that had been broken some considerable time before she was brought to the table. This bone having been broken quite through, and, I believe, without splinters, the contraction of the muscles had pulled the fractured ends half an inch by each other, and so as that they stood about three lines asunder. From the hard and osseous sides adjacent, two or three lateral bones have shot out, and pretty strongly joined the two parts of the fractured thigh-bone, without any thing I can call an osculation, because they were by no means in contact.

136. An old gentleman, a Romanist, and man of truth, who had studied physic at Prague, and practised it here with reputation, told me, that, when he was there, two Jews were executed for some crime on a public stage; that three Jesuits, mounting the stage with them, did all that was in their power to convert them to Christianity in their last moments; that one of these Jesuits pressed his arguments with a force of reason, and a most astonishing power in speaking, surpassing all that the crowded audience had ever heard; that the Jews did nothing all the time but spit in his face with virulence and fury; and that he, preserving his temper, wiped off the spittle, and pursued his persuasives, seemingly, at least, in the true spirit of Christian meekness and charity, but in vain. This very Jesuit soon after died, and when he was near his exit, his brethren of the same order, standing round his bed, lamented in most pathetic terms the approaching loss of the greatest and ablest man among them. The dying man then said, You see, my brethren, that all is now over with me. You may, therefore, now tell me who I am. One of them answered, Our order stole you, when little more than an infant, from your Jewish parents, and from motives of charity bred you a Christian. Am I a Jew then? said he, I renounce Christianity, and die a Jew. As soon as he was dead, the Jesuits threw his naked body without one of the city gates, and the Jews buried it. Query, had this man ever been a Christian? or if he mistook Jesuitism for Christianity, how came it to pass, that the approach of death, and his being pronounced a child of Abraham, should, all at once, recall him to his family, and set his mere blood in his estimation, above all the principles he had been habituated to from infancy? This is no otherwise to be answered, but by taking it for granted, that either he was delirious at the last, or judged that he had never known any thing, but chicane and hypocrisy for Christianity.

137. Of all sins, pride is most offensive to God; probably because it was the original sin of the devil, and led the way to all other sins; and because our Maker best knows the weakness and dependent nature of his creatures. Of all kinds of pride, he hates the spiritual most; probably because he most perfectly discerns our want of real worth, our wickedness, and our hypocrisy. Though all men are proud, yet there is nothing one man hates so much as the pride of another; and the reason is, because his pride cannot endure the overbearing of this passion in those he

hath to do with. Our Saviour's rule of self-abasement, and preference given to others, is found by experience to be the best method of conciliating to ourselves the affection, nay, and esteem too, of our acquaintances. All well-bred men are so sensible of this, that although they cannot esteem others more than themselves, they act to a certain length, as if they did. They fall back, they give the way, they declare themselves your humble servants, perhaps at a time when they are well enough disposed to kick you out of company. If they have not learned humility of Christ, they have learned the shew of it from their commerce with the world. It is owing to this, that though you can talk better than a Bolingbroke or Pope, you shall be more applauded for listening to a blockhead, than for speaking yourself. The pride of an infidel raises him to a contempt of all instruction, particularly all religious instruction, whether from God or man. He is self-sufficient, indeed all-sufficient for you, for me, and in a word, for mankind. The pride of a fanatic, derived to him through the same, or a like channel of conceit, lifts him to a similar elevation. He hath got it into his head, that he is inspired. No wonder, therefore, if the best you can say, unless in his praise, should be to him contemptible nonsense. He prays, preaches, dictates; and you are but a reprobate, if you do not admire him in all this, though therein there should be a world of stupidity and heterodoxy canted off. Highly, however, as he vaunts his inspiration, he fails not to help it out with artifice and cunning, as one who finds, that the spirit wants the aid of wry faces and tones to carry on the work of conversion. Among the many astonishing phenomena, exhibited by human nature, there is not perhaps one more surprising, than the coalescence of fanaticism and artifice in the same mind, especially when spiritual pride is superadded; and yet there are few things more common. The generality of writers consider Cromwell as a real fanatic. Taking it for granted that he was, though I greatly doubt the fact, it seems perfectly amazing to me, that a man of so great abilities should have afforded room within him for politics, slaughter, ambition, usurpation, and fanaticism, in any other sense, as to the last, than as the fittest instrument he could find to serve the purposes of his ambition and usurpation. The infidel thinks himself a perfect man; the fanatic is in his own opinion more than man. Query, is it possible, that both should be found in one man? The address of almost all fanatical preachers consists in a skilful use of tones, even more than of faces and looks,

by which they manage somewhat mechanical in human nature that is hardly resistible. Going, when I was a very young man, into a Quaker meeting-house, I heard a venerable looking preacher, as I believe more than fifty, hold forth for half an hour, without uttering any thing, but two expressions, no way relative to religion, namely, "under the shade of the cedar," and "on the bank of the clear stream." Of the former he made his first head, diversified it in many repetitions, by a sort of solemn tones, some of which were high and treble, others deep and base, that seemed to be pumped up from his belly.

In like manner, he made a second head of the latter, and here had an additional advantage in driving the word stream through his nose. After which, to furnish out a third head, he set himself and his audience at once under the shade of the cedar, and on the bank of the clear stream, and wrought the whole up to such a pitch of groans, tears, and agitations, as, I believe, no sensible discourse, not so delivered, ever did produce. Near thirty years afterward, a young attorney, a master of mimicry, preached a Quaker sermon to a room full of us on *malt*, which was his text. In the first part of his sermon he tore us to pieces with involuntary peals of laughter, but so changed his tones, that in the latter part he reduced us first to a very solemn degree of gravity; and then to such a state of grief and affliction, that had it not been for shame, some of us would have fled the room. For my own part, I was afraid of falling into some ugly fit, and was heartily glad to be relieved by his putting an end to the then too serious farce. There is nothing in our nature, at least not so often, nor so attentively observed, as the power which outward objects have in exciting joy, love, pity, anger; which renders us liable to the force of sounds and gestures, when artfully managed; as was once made evident by a musician at Venice, who by certain sounds and actions, could drive the attentive to distraction.

138. Self-origination may be philosophical, metaphysical, and what not? But to me it is gross nonsense. Origin implies beginning, and self implies, that the being, whosoever he is, hath given a beginning of existence to himself, which, one is apt to think, Dr. Clarke must have considered as impossible, and especially as he does not allow *αρχη*, John i. 1, to signify eternity. If *αρχη* cannot signify without beginning, how shall *origo*, or *origine*, do it, which always implies an entrance on existence, where there was none before? Will adding self help out the

matter? Did God, when not yet existing, give himself a being? No, but he existed of and by himself. He did so, but the words *origine*, and *origination*, imply the contrary as strongly as our English word beginning, and still more strongly than the Greek word αρχη. But it seems, as a semi-Arian, he wanted the word self-origination, to distinguish the Father from the Son, or Λογος, whom he would represent as merely derivative, and born in time, not at all aware of the third verse, which saith, 'by him,' that is, 'the Λογος, were all things made, and without him was not any thing made that was made;' not aware, that before all creation there was no being, but God; nor aware of what the Holy Ghost saith by St. Paul, Coloss. i. 16, 17; 'By him, Christ, were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.' What now becomes of the doctor's self-origination, attributed to the Father in contradistinction to the Son.

139. An extraordinary enthusiast of my acquaintance, with whom I had an occasion to hold an argument on a certain religious subject, reproved me for mixing, now and then, a little humour in the course of our debate, insisting that such a practice was profane, and asking me if there was any jesting in the Bible? I was forced to say in my defence, that his notions were often too ridiculous, whatsoever he might think of them, to admit of serious refutations; and that Solomon 'had desired me to answer a fool according to his folly.' As to jesting in the Bible, I observed to him, that there are some instances of the kind in that sacred book far surpassing any thing to be met with in other writings. Favour me but with one, quoth he. What think you of that by Jotham to Abimelech, who had murdered seventy sons of Gideon? The trees met to choose a king, and offered the crown to the olive-tree, the fig-tree, and the vine; but these refusing, they said to the bramble, Come thou and reign over us; and the bramble said to the oak and the cedar, Come and put your trust in my shadow. Or what say you to Elijah, in a case similar to the present, when he urged the prophets of Baal, praying to their god for fire from heaven, to shout a little louder, to gash themselves over again, for Baal, though he certainly is a god, is on a journey, or chatting with other gods, or asleep. The enthusiast allowed there was exquisite humour expressed by both Jotham and Elijah, but

doubted whether I could furnish a third instance. You will grant I can, when I shall have reminded you of Isaiah, who says, a man planted a young tree in the ground, which when it grew up to a large size he cut down, baked bread, and warmed himself with a fire made of the chips; and then forming a god out of the residue, he fell on his knees to worship and pray to it. That was confessed to exceed every thing.

> Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
> Tangit; et admissus circum præcordia ludit.—PERSIUS.

140. New friends, new servants, and new brooms, may do best for some time; but a daily acquisition of new ones is too expensive, and too hazardous.

141. What have I to do, in my own character, with this masquerade of life? I am known to every one, and know nobody. What I say is understood by every one; but of what is said to me, I understand not a tittle. Your servant says one, and does me some mischief. I am glad to see you, says another; and so he is, for he chouses me of somewhat. It is time to leave these artificial lights, and to go home to my bed till day breaks.

142. It would be happy for all men to be Christians; but every man should know what it is to be a Christian. This knowledge may be easily found in the holy Scriptures, and nowhere else with certainty. These Scriptures compose a book, which, beside pointing out a sure way to happiness, temporal and eternal, contains a variety of matters, more excellent and charming to a reader of true taste than all other books. It speaks in a language of more simplicity, sublimity, and power, than that of human genius in its highest efforts. It is partly historical, and partly didactic. Every thing most important and interesting to mankind is detailed in its history, and its lessons of piety and morality are powerful and perfect. These latter are not dryly arranged in scholastic method, but intermixed with the history, where they shine forth in living characters, whether good or bad, with a most affecting brilliancy. And here the best characters, most favoured by the historian, are branded with the blemishes and crimes to which in fact they were liable, and followed with such rewards, or pursued with such reproofs or punishments, as divine justice required. Herein are found such strains of poetry, as loudly speak the divinity of their Author. Herein we every where meet with strokes of oratory, which speak more in five or six words, and with greater power, than the long elaborate orations of De-

mosthenes or Cicero. And to set these infinitely farther still above all human efforts of the kind, they are accompanied with predictions, often the most unlikely, and sometimes, to human apprehension, impossible to be fulfilled; and yet, at a great distance of time, most exactly verified by events. Again, to give these predictions credit when they were uttered, and to raise a well-grounded expectation of the accomplishment, innumerable miracles were wrought, to prove that almighty power ensured the dictates of infinite wisdom. The inquisitive reader no sooner wishes to know for what end or purpose this astonishing interposition of the Divine Being is asserted to have been given, than he finds that end repeatedly declared in the same book to be no other, than the reformation of mankind, and their real happiness. An end of less consequence, or of less connexion with infinite goodness, cannot be supposed. The man that knows himself, that is, how very incapable he is of reforming himself, or attaining to true happiness, by his own endeavours, must either believe in this interposition, and give his faith to this book; or maintain that he wants no help, and that God is neither willing nor able to help him. The man who says this, to be consistent with himself, should say, There is no God, no Being, who created and governs the world. If he does not go so far in words, the rest of mankind should beware of him, if they know him, for sure it is he will go farther in his actions.

143. It is very observable, that several of the classic authors are beholden for some of their finest sentiments to the Old Testament. Ovid, Virgil, Horace, are evidently traceable to this fountain. The *fortior qui se*, &c. of Horace is borrowed from Prov. xvi. 32. His *divinæ particulum auræ*, &c. from Gen. ii. 7. and his

> Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum,
> Cum faber incertus scamnum facereve Priapum,
> Malluit esse deum.

from Isa. xliv. 14—17. As to his word *secundum*, in the twelfth ode of his first book, the most elevated expression ever used by a Pagan writer, speaks the very language of the whole Old Testament, and is rather too much to have been taken from Homer's golden chain, wherewith his Cretan Jupiter seems to make a boastful approach to the sentiment. It is not to be expected, that classic plagiaries should acknowledge their thefts. Like the modern, they hoped not to be traced to books of little repute among

the Romans, books too which they were always ready to vilify, a common practice now-a-days among the borrowers, who, for a similar reason, use their utmost endeavours to stifle the credit of the writers they plunder. Thus have I myself been sometimes used, to my great comfort, as one who writes for religion rather than a name, and is glad to see his poor endeavours turned into common stock in hands more popular than his own. It never entered into the heads of the Roman poets, that the Old Testament should one day come to be read and studied by all the literary part of mankind.

144. Is man intended by his Maker for immortality? If he is, what is this life to him? It is certainly of no consequence to him, but as it fits him for immortal happiness, or misery. Taking the matter in this light, he is certainly a madman, who gives his attention chiefly to this life and the things of it. The accomplishment of his temporal schemes requires a world of thought and labour; which, after all, are a great deal more likely to miscarry than succeed. But if they do succeed, so as to raise him to wealth and power, is he happy? Or had it not been better for him to have been poor and powerless? If the afflictions that attend on his worldly exaltation have not convinced him of his mistake, and he be still fool enough to be pleased with his prosperity, his delusion must vanish at the near approach of a death, which must probably throw his too worldly mind, at least, into a total uncertainty about his condition in eternity. Now, though this man had risen to the condition of a Crœsus, or a Cæsar, hath he not made a very little man of himself? These two men stand on record, the first for his captivity, and the second for his assassination. The Christian may, and therefore ought, to plan for somewhat higher and more permanent. Poor Crœsus! Wretched Cæsar! As heathens, they ought, for they might, to have pursued a wiser and better scheme of life, as Solon and Atticus did. But, for a Christian, with heaven and eternity open to him, to scheme for a minute proportion of the riches possessed by the former, or for a paltry share of the power to which the latter attained, is exhibiting an example of greater contentment and humility than his religion requires of him. There is a species of riches, and also of power, infinitely exceeding all this world can raise us to, which may be arrived at, with absolute certainty, and with far less struggle, than the painted clouds and shadows pursued here below. The worst we can

say of Alexander and Cæsar is, that their lives were founded on a mistake, and passed in the dark; but what can be said of a Christian, in broad day-light, eagerly pursuing what he knows to be trifles, in preference to somewhat, which he confesses to be of infinite moment, but that he is an idiot equally desperate and despicable? What a saint might he be, if he had any idea of the right avarice and ambition! Of both, God hath, in his mercy, given me an idea, and made me even a teacher of others; hath enabled me to distinguish between matters similar, and nearly equal in value, as between a shilling and a halfpenny. And yet (wretch that I have been!) I have in my actions often so demeaned myself, as if I preferred evil to good, and hell to heaven. I that have been a teacher of others, have not always been a fit teacher of myself. Reflecting on these things, I am struck with horror and astonishment at myself. I need not look abroad for wonders, for I am a wonder to myself. Heaven and earth can afford no greater to me, excepting one, which is the long-suffering patience and mercy of God, shewn to me through a long course of sins and provocations, wherewith I have, as it were, contended with divine goodness. I need not stand amazed, how it should come to pass, that matter should both attract and repel matter; that general attraction and magnetism should operate on the same piece of matter in opposite directions, and in one and the same line, at the same instant; how God should with certainty foresee our free elections; why he made the world so soon, and not sooner; how there can be in him a Trinity of Persons; how he joined the human nature to his own; or how he will raise the dead. All these things are too wonderful for my comprehension; and so is the display of wisdom, goodness, and power in the creation, in the redemption and sanctification of mankind, and in the infinite miracles, whether by, or against, the course of nature, which God hath wrought. The facts I clearly know, or firmly believe. My senses and my reason do not more convince me of my own existence, than the latter doth, of all these things, whether as matters of science or belief. Still I remain an unaccountable creature to myself. I sin, but am still indulged, ten thousand different ways, by the goodness of God my Master, to whom I am a most unworthy servant. I sin, yet still I am fed and clothed, have a flowery carpet spread under me, and an azure canopy stretched over me. I feel, I taste, I see, hear, and smell; but how, I know no more than the dog at my foot; nor do I in-

quire, sensible that it would be in vain. I go on to enjoy, and am sometimes thankful, but, I fear, never grateful. What! Not grateful, O my soul! Whither then art thou going, upward or downward? Think, think, O my soul! Death and eternity are before thee, and near at hand. 'Turn thee, for why wilt thou die, and, after preaching to others, become a castaway thyself?' Blessed be thou, O my God, and blessed be thy Holy Spirit, for I am awake, but that is almost all. O most gracious Being, who perfectly knowest me, help me; and if it be thy blessed will, help others through me, in order to prove that salvation wrought by so weak an instrument, is the work of Thee alone. I have not thus expressed myself merely by way of confession, a matter of little concern to any one who may happen to read this, but that some, not unacquainted with my failings, may know my contrition; that the goodness of God may be magnified, as well as tried, by my offences; and that other members of Christ's body, as if by consent of parts, being struck by my acknowledgments, may feel somewhat of a like nature in themselves. It is no balsam to the wounds in my conscience, that many other men may have reason, as well as I, to lament the inconsistency of their practice, on some occasions, with the soundness of their principles; but it may be of some use to them to know, that I am neither impenitent, nor without hope of pardon. At any rate, if 'all men have sinned,' though some more, some less grievously, than I have done; my humiliation and confession do not make me more guilty than I am, nor expose me to any other sort of reflections, than others are forced to make on themselves. This, as I have just now intimated, although no comfort to me, ought at least to shelter me from the shower of stones, which the affectedly righteous might be preparing for the head of a fellow-sinner. It was, and still is, the opinion of the Jews, and of many among the professors of Christianity, that the devil is able to work miracles. Nothing certainly can be more absurd, than thus to give the attribute of Almighty to a fallen spirit. God only can work a miracle, whether with, or without the instrumentality of a creature. But that which in the works of the devil approaches nearest to a miracle, is that which I have taken notice of, namely, his prevailing with a man possessed of reason and all his senses, to prefer evil to good, and hell to heaven; to turn his back on God and happiness, and to pursue with vehemence the service of an evil spirit, and misery eternal. A miracle is somewhat done, by almighty power against

the otherwise uncontrollable course of nature. And sin, in one acquainted with Christianity, and believing in the truth of its principles, is somewhat done in violation of those principles, and directly against every dictate of sense and reason. This is a wonder though not a miracle, for this is aided by corrupted nature; whereas a miracle is done against that very nature, which God himself hath established in his works of creation. The evil spirit having, through an abuse of our moral freedom, seduced and corrupted our nature, finds it now an easier task to blind our reason, to baffle our senses, and to lead us, by worldly profit, carnal pleasure, and mistaken ambition, into misery and infamy. This is giving a very poor account of ourselves, and making a still worse apology for our misconduct; but it is all that can be said in tracing the dreadful phenomenon to its source; yet, after all, did we not, with all our might, assist our enemy in this his scheme of imposition on us, he could make no great progress therein, so that the sinner may claim to himself more than one half of this seeming miracle. No power of hell could overthrow him, did he not, by efforts of his own, labour to fling himself down the precipice; were he not a seducer and devil to himself.

145. Bodies of all sorts are easily brought into contact, and fluids in particular intimately mixed. In like manner, to speak by analogy, spiritual substances may become coincident, act on or with one another, and separate again. A generic sameness in these latter, notwithstanding specific differences, may make it much easier for them to coexist and sympathize, than for spirit and matter, howsoever organized, to do the like. Yet we know, that in ourselves a soul and body are so united, as to act together, and to enjoy or suffer, as if they were but one being. Nay, the souls of two human beings, though both embodied, and kept, as it were, at some distance, find it easy to act on each other by looks, language, and good or evil offices. We have so many experiments to prove this, that it becomes ridiculous to doubt whether spirit and spirit may not perceive, and communicate with each other by intuition. They do it in man, though specifically different. In him the angelic and animal soul so subsist and act together, as if but one and the same. In him therefore the subsistence at once of more souls than two is possible; and the conjunction of soul with soul, seems to be infinitely more natural than of soul with body. Hence it is that the admission of

a third spirit, good or evil, into a man, is to the full as possible, because a more easy conjunction, I mean more easily conceived, than his original composition. Yet possession and exorcism, as related in the gospel, are trumped up by some, always in quest of food for their infidelity, as shrewd objections to our holy religion. The late Dr. Mead, a writer of but narrow powers, even in his own profession, hath left a very silly treatise on scriptural distempers, wherein he endeavours to prove them all purely natural In this he is aided by the similarity of some of them to nervous complaints. But, when his reader waits to see howhis argument is pursued to the case of that demoniac, out of whom a legion o devils were driven from a man into a numerous herd of swine, he sees the writer durst not touch the subject. Sensible of this his confessed defeat, the piddling infidels, who have taken up the same argument, have not done him the honour of a citation, but have had recourse to a retail from others, of stuff as weak as his But supposing they had been able to give the possessions mentioned, some show of superstition in believers, what would that avail towards discrediting the other miracles; with a word or two healing the sick, giving agility to the lame, giving sight to the blind, raising the dead, silencing the winds and smoothing the seas in a storm; and doing these things on innumerable occasions, in any place, at any time, as crowds of people from all quarters called out for his help? Some varlets, after committing crimes of a most heinous nature, by way of apology for themselves, lay all on the temptations of the devil; but our infidels, more generous and grateful to him, who patronises all their pleasures, ascribe none of their sins to him, sometimes deny his very being; nay, and give the title of virtue to their vices, as rather willed by God, than dictated by a devil. We have too many proofs of wickedness among ourselves, to doubt of the permission, the existence, and agency of other spirits similar to these. We have some idea of the good or evil communication of one spirit upon another, from that which passes between man and man. We do not so clearly conceive how good or evil angels operate upon our souls, no more than how our souls operate upon our bodies. It is enough for us to know its possibility. Reason may carry us so far, revelation vouches the fact. Piety and virtue must in man undergo many and dangerous trials, because great and well tried must be that piety and virtue, which can raise us to the nature of angels, and qualify us for heaven. This must certainly be one reason why we are permitted to tempt one another, and why evil

spirits of a more subtle nature are permitted to tempt us all. How they aggravate our corruptions, and inflame our passions, it is impossible, or at least needless, for us to know. That they do it, true religion leaves us no room to doubt. If then they are permitted to tempt us into sin, the very worst they could do us, their entering into some men, and perverting their faculties, or afflicting their bodies, may be permitted also for reasons, which, whether understood by us or not may be immaterial, as it is in regard to every thing else which we do not, cannot understand. Of these however, we can arrive at some imperfect notions. Those already hinted need not be repeated. Of those angels who have rebelled, the wise and good God will nevertheless serve himself in that way and measure of his own, which alone their malignity of nature still qualifies them for, that is, for some time to tempt such morally free beings as he intends to exalt into the heavenly stations, which they have so basely deserted, but not until the whole intelligent creation shall see, after much trial and exercise in virtue, they are qualified to fill. To push this grand intention yet farther into execution, he hath, on certain occasions, permitted the delinquent spirits to enter into, and take a temporary possession of some persons, seen or foreseen, to be qualified for this possession; as for instance, when his Son came into the world, that by his absolute power over those original criminals, the faithful followers of his Son may perceive the ample sufficiency for their salvation of him they are to depend on. His victory over sin and death, and 'over him who hath the power of both,' affords an assurance to us weak mortals, that 'he is able to save to the uttermost.' His other miracles, without this, were convincing; but this is comfortable and encouraging. We are too apt to magnify, in our ignorant and superstitious apprehensions, the cunning and power of devils. But supposing both to be ten thousand times greater than they are, they are nothing to the wisdom and might 'of him, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given.' If evil spirits are let loose upon us, the Holy Spirit is sent to us; and if he be for us, 'who shall be against us?' The Christian hero (and every real Christian is a hero) 'shall stand fast in the faith, shall quit himself like a man of God, and shall be strong,' too strong, for all the powers of hell in opposition. Devils shall be defeated; and the host of heaven, looking down on the triumphs of dust and ashes, shall make it ring with hosannas to that Spirit, who crowns the victory of a poor man, once a sinner, over an army of devils. This man, and none

but this, is fit to augment that concert, and to be intrusted with the guardianship of kingdoms, and of worlds. Let then the arch-fiend accuse a Job; let him drive a soul to despair; let him be 'a lying spirit in the mouths of Zedekiah, and other false prophets;' let him distract the minds and torture the bodies for a time, of some miserable sufferers in the days of Christ, they shall be soon delivered, and the king of spirits glorified by the expulsion of their enemy. While I am sensible there are many wicked spirits, going about in the shape of men; and while I firmly believe there are others, disembodied, every where setting snares, casting nets, and stirring up horrible persecutions against me; it is the consolation of my soul to know, there is one infinitely greater than they, who hath already taught me to depend on his protection, not only by his promise to be with me, but the experimental proofs of his dominion over them, exhibited before his witnesses, found faithful by their attesting blood, on crosses and in flames. On too many occasions, trusting to my own strength, or inattentive to the arts of my enemy, I have fallen; and God hath let me see, that I had no strength at all. But he hath (glory to his mercy!) as often lifted me out of the mire, whereinto I had plunged myself, 'washed me in his own blood, set my feet on the rock' of his promises, 'and ordered my goings.' I am now so taught, that henceforth I shall trust, but not presume. His 'strength is already manifested,' and I hope will soon be 'made perfect in my weakness.'

TO MRS. SARAH STRINGER.

146. You needs must have the portrait of my face,
Tho' destitute of beauty and of grace;
Let me then have a picture of your mind,
By its own lustre half as well design'd,
That I may look—and live above myself
Still less a slave to penury and pelf.
Thou best of women! whence dost thou derive,
That piety and virtue, which in thee survive
The dead or dying goodness of an age,
Wherein all vices now triumphant rage?
Whence, to thy God that understanding given?
Whence, that expansion of thy heart to heaven?
What makes thy very soul in flames aspire
At every spark of heaven-descended fire?
Why thus combustible to that alone,
Thy victim heart? 'Tis kindred to thy own.

Why round thy dwelling crowd the starving poor,
And fed, still wistful, linger at thy door?
Led by thine own, and their united prayers,
Thou gainst at least the foot of Jacob's stairs.
Whence art thou, Sarah, wondrously combin'd
Of pigmy body, and gigantic mind?
If aught at all, in that so scanty mould,
A petticoated Barrow we behold.
In vain to find thee, we our eye-balls roll—
Thou hast no body—thou art only soul.
Say, whence this grandeur, this celestial frame
Of life and manners, thou exalted dame?
O glorious work of nature, and of grace!
If we thy upward path attempt to trace,
O teach us, where that vigour we may find,
Which thus refines, and consecrates thy mind,
We wish indeed to climb thy arduous hill,
But find a want of sinews in our will.
My orphan child, born in an age and clime,
Both adverse, had been starv'd before its time.
From foe to foe, from post to pillar tost,
The little prattler had been surely lost,
Had'st thou not o'er it thrown thy shelt'ring arm,
And in thy bosom laid it safe and warm,
There 'midst thy other poor, its food was found,
There balsam furnish'd for its deadly wound;
And thence, new-cloth'd, it limps and waddles round.
In this, and daily still, in better deeds,
The constant tenor of thy life proceeds.
Grateful to thee, are rais'd a father's eyes,
Who for a portion of thy spirit sighs.

ANSWERED.

I did but sip the fountain in his side,
And taste his grace, who under Pilate died,
When all the poor effects you dignify,
And I lament, as nothing in my eye,
By gratitude and love took place within,
Expelling all the foul remains of sin.
This done, I, worm-like, upward strove to creep,
And all the little height I gain'd to keep.
I rarely make a step, but never stride,
And, as if sins, my languid virtues hide.

Thus humbly persevering I ascend,
And hope for wings, before my journey's end.
A low foundation bids the building rise.
How low should that be, which attempts the skies!
Let all men look to Christ, as I have done,
And shut their eyes to things beneath the sun;
So shall his charity, that lovely fire,
Their kindling hearts, and rising souls inspire.

TO DOCTOR FLEURY.

147. Friend to my health, accept this fee,
In lieu of sterling, since from me
Gold you refuse, to spare my pouch,
Although you know, the good Latouche
To me is kinder far than Phœbus,
Who scarce will credit me a rebus.
Curmudgeon god! If still so close,
I vow, I'll have recourse to prose.
Yet why to prose? A fig for him;
In doggrel, this shall sink or swim.
Do you prescribe and I will swallow,
My friend, my more than great Apollo.
You that can cure by not prescribing,
More than some kill by gorging, bibing
Well paid—for lumps, and draughts of stuff,
Not worth a single pinch of snuff.
Brought to a wise and candid test,
Among physicians, he's the best,
Who best knows, nothing how to do,
When to trust nature; and yet who,
When nature wants his helping hand,
Is not one moment at a stand,
Best means and medicines to direct,
Whereby her ailments may be check'd,
You are this man, or I'm mistaken,
For else why trust to you my bacon?
Come tell me how I am, my Fleury,
For I on me will call no jury
Of tongue, or eye, or pulse-explorers,
Of urinal or close-stool porers.
And if I am not well, prescribe,
In place of all your healing tribe.
What I, your friend, shall take, or do,
Must now depend alone on you.

Say whatsoe'er you will, for why,
I shall at most but live, or die.
Neither, my friend, for fee or song,
Can you a life, so old, prolong.
What man can do, from you I hope;
But who with seventy-eight can cope?
Your best endeavours can but land,
The man you love on farther strand.
With lenient hand then let him sink,
Without a jolt from off the brink.
Drop your emollients in his ear,
And on his mind—but not a tear.
Take care I be not earth'd alive,
Like hunted badger, nor survive,
Of washing hags th' indecent joke,
Of pipes the mercenary smoke.
I would not, Doctor, hear or see,
Of my own funeral the glee.
Like Charles the Fifth I gave no cause,
For my own posthumous applause.
The orphan's sigh I would not hear,
Nor see the poor old widow's tear.
What, you a doctor? And not kill!
Not kill in earnest! Where's the pill,
The lancet, potion, and purgation,
Enough to desolate the nation?
But failing these, pray use the knife,
And let me not outlive my life.
Ah! why so gross a bull in death?
Why breathe beyond my latest breath?
Hash me, O mince me for the taste
Of churchyard rats, and let them feast.
'Tis almost all I have to leave,
Much good may't do them in my grave.
Yet to what purpose all this care,
How non-existence is to fare?
By Berkeley's, *fly, Jack, and be gone*,*
Denounc'd against my flesh and bone,
By Law's episcopalian *hocus*,
By Priestley's presbyterian *pocus*,
My body whiffled into thought,
My soul too juggled into nought,

* Juggler's cant.

At best, must now with matter share
In their phlogiston, or fix'd air:
Of soul and body thus bereft,
I've not a rag of being left,
All my precautions are prevented,
And rats and worms must fast contented.
If you don't like this rhyming letter,
Nor can inspire me with a better,
Then cure me, Doctor, of this itch,
And spare not either head or breech.
If there is help in drug or birch,
Leave not Old White-head in the lurch.
Old as I am, in this I'm clear,
I dress you as you should appear;
I fit you, Fleury, with a coat,
Although in all things else I doat.
Farewell, my Doctor, and my friend
To save the life be still your end.
Health to your patients, and yourself,
And, as you say, a fig for pelf!
To heal the sick, none ever knew,
A safer method, sure, than you.
Nature with art in you combines
To ransack seas, and fields, and mines;
And, whether life or death betides,
Sound judgment o'er the whole presides.
Don't spare our fees, nor stint your purse,
To wishing heirs be still a curse.
From me, and rich men take our gold,
But to the poor lend health unsold.
At least give death for nothing, that is,
Let wretched Lazarus die gratis.
Let not his tatter'd female honey
Cry, what, to lose both man and money!
Tho' she don't say it, she's more willing
To part with him, than with a shilling.
He has done nothing this half year,
And if he dies now, she is clear,
And may have Jerry Quill the weaver,
Or, better still, young Pound the pavier.
A shilling sav'd, or shilling got,
The same for head, or back, or pot,
May help her wrinkled hide to cover
From a too young, and sighted lover.

In dealing with the poor is made
More, than by any other trade;
You know full well, that here I clark it,
And regulate, or tell the market.
Whate'er by you to them is lent
Shall here return in Cent. per Cent.;
For this a bond, already given,
Is long since register'd in heaven.
The rich to poor men may give wealth,
And you to sick men may give health;
Yet, O my friend, of this be sure,
More may be given by the poor.
His prayer, for ever, upward goes,
The bail of joys, the shield from woes.
The poor will pray for your success,
And into cures your med'cines bless.
His blessing therefore be your fee,
That you may heal the rich, and

ME.

148. Whatsoever our pride mixes or interferes with, becomes immediately a matter of consequence with us, occasions violent struggles, and stirs up bitter disputes. Distinction is the chief of these. Who is, or shall be deemed a gentleman, that is, one raised above vulgarity, is a point not less necessary to a large class of minds, than even the enjoyment of a competency; families that are hard put to it for the necessaries of life, put in a claim to this title, and support it by various pretensions, which often have no relation to it, and which, if they had, the claimants are wholly, or almost wholly, destitute of. One must needs be a gentleman, because he hath got a liberal education; another, because his manners are pitched above moral turpitude; another, because he dresses well, and can make a good bow; another, because he is possessed of some employment which supports him above the meanness of manual labour; another, because his exterior address is that of a well-bred man; another, because he affects the reputation of a man of honour, though there is hardly an instance of knavery or baseness, which he is not occasionally prepared for; another, because he hath, somehow or other, acquired riches enough to live independent, as he calls it. Undoubtedly, this last makes the nearest approach to the title; but he must nevertheless give it up, if it is still remembered among his neighbours,

that his fortune was made by a mechanic, by trade, or by base arts, in himself, his father, or his ancestors, if indeed he had any ancestor. The man said sensibly, who going to an auction of portraits, which belonged to a decayed family, and being asked, whither he was moving, and for what, answered, I am going to buy ancestors. The great Lord Burleigh hath ruled the definition of a gentleman, and that, according to the received opinion of mankind, namely, the possession of old riches, handed down through a family from time immemorial. The compliment of this title, therefore, is founded on riches, on antiquity of riches; and it is rightly observed, that the king can make a lord, but not a gentleman. The title then is worldly, and issues from an office long ago held, or riches long ago gathered, and is set and held up by pride alone. In the rank of real gentlemen, as classed by Lord Burleigh, and indeed by the world, there are many, who make a jest of imputed sin and righteousness; and yet found their whole distinction on imputations from progenitors, not patriots, not heroes, but for the greatest part, purse-proud oppressors. These will cavil at the genealogy of Christ, and shew a family-tree of their own, with many a branch lopped off, and as many grafts inserted from great and wealthy families, which you neither know, nor care to distinguish; and so the shewer passes for a gentleman, if not for a prince, and you must make your bow accordingly, at least to the tree, as if inhabited by a goddess, at the time you contemn the scoundrel branch. Every one now-a-days, above the condition of a scavenger, is a gentleman, if he can but trace himself to somebody. Nay, the wife and daughter of a grocer shoot up into ladies, before he can get off his apron; but he drudges on, in hope, that he too shall one day, look a little lordly in a curricle and country-house, which may swell into a coach and country-seat, at least in the days of his son. In the mean time, violently disposed as the men are to swell into an ideal magnitude, the women in hoops outgrow, and outstride them so fast, that the poor husband looks like one of an inferior species to his wife. If old wealth makes the gentleman, how shall we distinguish him who hath no wealth, old or new? Or how long is the unnatural union to last, which is made between poverty and vanity? Not only the mob of mankind, and nice heralds they are, but families, grown rich only ere-yesterday, are careful to keep down the son of a dunghill, who emerged but yesterday. It never went well with religion, since the clergy set

up for gentlemen. The haughty title is of this world, and can never suit the character of a Christian, whether lay or clerical, because Christ's kingdom is not of this world. But as Christ 'took upon him the form of a servant,' was born in a stable, and cradled in a manger, how can the servant of this servant become a gentleman? How can he think of renouncing the kingdom of Christ, and set up for pomp and figure? How can he think of building on church emoluments, given by piety for the purposes of charity, a fastuous or luxurious scheme of life? How can he, as from himself in a sermon, or as from Christ in a psalm or lesson, inculcate humility, if he makes it evident to his people, that, after all, he is but a gentleman, that is, hath taken from this world, or rather from the devil, whom, as even a Christian, he had solemnly renounced, a title, on which he wishes for respect? One should think, that on the footing of common sense only, he ought to aim at a little consistency, and at that sort of respect, which is due to the sacred character he assumes. To set up for more, in any sense, than his Divine Master did while here, and to spunge on the faith of his parishioners for the materials of that pride and luxury against which he must declaim in the pulpit, only that he may swagger over the heads of other Christians, hath somewhat in it too preposterous, nay, too base, for the only dignity he values himself upon, that of a gentleman. The son of a king, or a lord, the moment he becomes a clergyman, becomes a servant, as Christ, Son to the King of kings, and Lord of lords did, when he took our nature upon him. It was in this nature, that he, exhibiting a proof of humility, infinitely exceeding all possibility in other men, of equal condescension, said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' What! a kingdom for the reward of humility! How can a minister of the gospel read this to others, over and over again, and never to himself? He can, it seems, without understanding one tittle of its meaning, for he is still a gentleman. A sorry gentleman indeed! whose income must die with him; and his family, after saucily indulging themselves in figure and luxury, must sink into indigence and contempt. A sorry gentleman, above the duties of his office, unfaithful to his Master, and now exposed to an account, inevitably terminating in everlasting infamy! Too proud to bear such behaviour in his servant, as he hath rendered to his God and master, how shall he stand the trial he is to undergo? Will he plead, he was a gentleman? What! an ungrateful, unfaithful, and trea-

cherous gentleman! The very best among us, after doing all he was commanded to do, must acknowledge himself 'an unprofitable servant,' inasmuch as he never could repay the price which was laid down for his soul. What then will become of him, who set up for a gentleman, and assumed a superiority over the other servants, only because he found means to riot in the fruits of their labour, while he almost wholly neglected his own duty, as if he took his master to be an idiot! If at any time, in obedience to a statute, he piddled at a formal performance, he did it with such a cold indifference to the success, with such a disregard to religion and its Author, and with so much the air of a gentleman about him, that the office proved useless and disgustful in his hands to the plain Christian, who could not forbear comparing his with the behaviour of Christ, when he washed the feet of his disciples. If a poor man uncovered in the rain, had the boldness to speak to him, his answer was like that of a Nabal, 'who was such a son of Belial, that a man could not speak to him.' This is but a faint picture of a servant turned gentleman. Howsoever other clergymen, and their wives, may think of this matter, I declare it utterly impossible for me ever to have been a gentleman. My father had ten children, and so scanty means for their support, that, had it been left to one only, it could have but barely raised him above indigence. And now, that I am undeservedly beneficed, it never enters in my head to consider myself in any other light, but that of a parish-charge; and now and then, in a hard year, as an illiberal treasurer of my parishioner's money for the relief of their poor. Lord, pity me, an unworthy servant; but had I been a gentleman, I should probably have been still more so. Was Peter, John, or Nathaniel, gentlemen? Or did any one ever hear of a gentleman going to be hanged for our religion? At least, if any one did, was he called a gentleman by the attending mob, those best judges and adorers of gentlemen? I shall readily own, there is a species of ambition, or call it pride if you please, which is so far from being culpable, that the Spirit of God applies to it, as an instrument within us of the noblest virtues, namely, the promise of 'eternal life to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour, and immortality.' Here it is, that the true clergyman, laying his low foundation in humility, and working like a real labourer in Christ's vineyard, by bringing down the contumacious, by comforting the disconsolate, by instructing the ignorant; now 'by the terrors of the Lord persuading men,' and

then again by his promises animating them in their pilgrimage to a better life; and in all these by his charities, temporal and spiritual, as by so many miracles, wrought in the face of a selfish and hardened world, proves his mission from the fountain of all good. Here he soars far above the character of a gentleman, treads on his own and the pride of others, and rises so high above this world that its paltry gentlemen, nay, its lords and kings, had they the right sort of eyes, might, from their vale of misery, see his crown sparkling with stars, and a higher order of beings crowding round him, who, though encompassed with flesh and blood, 'hath fought the good fight of faith,' and is soon to hear the triumphant approbation of his master, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' Now, what can the herald or the mob give, that does not become despicable in comparison with this? Why then should a parson stupidly wish to be a gentleman? But even in the present state of things, and far as mankind have degenerated into an admiration of worldly greatness, I will venture to say, that the character of a clergyman, well and uniformly supported, will not fail to attract from all around him a present degree of honour, far exceeding that of all the titles in this world. In a state of so base and so general an inattention to the duties of our function, and that so evidently arising from the pride we take in the worldly emoluments wherewith it is endowed, a conscientious clergyman, with but half the exertion required of him, might appear like a saint, at least of the second magnitude, in the first century of Christianity. A very moderate degree of goodness in himself, and of fidelity in the discharge of his duty, would, by its rarity, raise a clergyman, in these degenerate days, to credit and honour, above those of nobility itself, I mean in the esteem of all who have any right to establish the characters of others. This is an equally shameful and melancholy reflection. But I appeal for the truth of it to the few who have made the experiment. As to the censure and report of mankind in general, it will ever be of a piece with that which our blessed Saviour found it in the midst of his speaking, 'as never man spoke,' and doing as never man could do. Hear him on the subject of humility. 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; and he that exalteth himself shall be abased. If I your lord and master have washed your feet, ye ought to wash one another's feet.' The least among you shall be the greatest, and the greatest least. He understands little or nothing of the work

Christ came to do, who does not know, that he set himself to invert a wicked and miserable world; for our conviction, miraculously to change or suspend the nature he had impressed on things here below; for our conversion, to change that sinful nature which the enemy, by the infusion of lust and pride, had given us; to turn the good things of the world, as we call them, when we make them temptations to sin, into evil things; and the evil things, poverty and affliction, into good things; to bring about in us the happy miracle of reformation; and, in a word, that the 'first might be the last, and the last, first,' that is, that pride might be brought low, and humility raised, that old things might pass away, and that 'all things might become new.' For this purpose, he was here 'as one that serveth.' For this purpose, he chose out the meanest of mankind to teach the world; the 'foolish things to confound the wise; the weak things to confound the mighty, that no man might glory in His presence!' What then comes of the gentleman in thee, O thou clergyman? Art thou better than Peter or Nathaniel? Art thou greater than Christ? Hath his poverty opened a scene of riches and luxury to thee? Hath his humility raised thee to pride, and made a gentleman of thee? Poor unfaithful and despicable fool! The time approaches fast when thou shalt bewail, probably too late, thy gross mistake, in eternal poverty and abasement. Get out of thy palace, sell thy coach, 'give to the poor, and take up thy cross.' I know it is pleaded by many among us, that, to attract respect from the upper orders of men, and veneration from the vulgar, the clergy ought to be gentlemen; and that the cause of religion, now miracles are ceased, cannot be well supported, without this veneration, and that respect. What then! Cannot God maintain his own cause, but by borrowing aids from a wicked world, and even from the devil? The clergyman, actuated by this monstrous opinion, mean the gratification of their own pride, and by no means the cause of religion, which never was, never can be supported by aids so foreign to itself, nay, so directly opposite to its very nature and principles. If the love of God and piety, if humility, sequestration from the world, charity, and diligence in the discharge of duty, in its preachers, cannot effect the blessed work we have in hand, how idle, how impious is it, to depend, on pride and secularization, which it is the business of God's word and of all our sermons to beat down, and eradicate from our own and the minds of all our hearers? Is not this sawing down the

branch on which we sit, to rest our feet on the weeds below? After all, if the character of a gentleman, as now held up to the world, carried in it any thing of religion and sanctity, which it certainly does not, but the very reverse, somewhat from thence, I mean affability and beneficence, might be adopted into that of a clergyman, of no little use to the sacred ends of our calling. As matters are at present, nothing good is to be hoped for from a mixture so heterogeneous.

149. A man disposed to do some little good now and then, may be permitted to effect it. But if he attempts to go much farther, and to execute some great and excellent purpose, though wholly for the benefit of other men, he must expect to be opposed. He 'that would live godly,' not to say godlike, 'in this present world, must look for persecution.' When therefore you undertake somewhat of uncommon eclat in goodness, let it be your prudence to conceal, if you possibly can, under some low and selfish design, your grand intention. If this may not be, the instant you have accomplished your noble purpose, fly from your country, or hide yourself in some obscure corner of it, that you may escape from the eye and tongue of envy. Either 'be not righteous overmuch, for why wilt thou destroy thyself?' or fly for your life, as if you had committed murder. This concealment from your left hand of what your right hand is doing, will help to prevent the vanity in you which the applause of a few good people might be apt to excite, and may screen you from that envy, which will do no good nor suffer others to do it, unrevenged. The precaution, here given, could not have been used by our blessed Saviour, because his mission required, that all his actions should lie open to the view of mankind, and that he should suffer death as a consequence of them. But as you perhaps are not called to such consequences, you will do well, I believe, not to draw them on yourself by an insult on other people. You are allowed to be 'as wise as a serpent,' if you are but 'as harmless as a dove.' If you would go farther than mere harmlessness, and be great in goodness, the wisdom of a thousand serpents and foxes will be necessary to your safety. The author of the old Whole Duty of Man, aware of what I have been saying, put it out of the power of mankind to discover him as the giver of that, and such other performances, as never came from the hand of any other uninspired writer; and hath done ten times more good, by not being known to do any, than even by the excellence itself of

his works. Contemporary, with him, there was another, who, by silence and secrecy effected the greatest miracle of profane history, properly so called; I mean General Monk. This man, greatly qualified for military service, was sent by Cromwell to command an army in Scotland, where, at least a severe degree of execution was expected of him; and he had the address so to manage matters, as not wholly to disappoint his employer, and yet to make himself exceeding popular among the Scotch. Cromwell had, at the same time, two other armies, of considerable force in England, and one of them quartered in and about London. All these armies had taken the solemn league and covenant, and were violently, both by religious, and political prejudices, imbittered against the king, and the old constitution, in the church and state. With an army thus disposed, Monk, under God, effected the restoration at once, as well of the constitution, as of the king, in spite of both the other armies, but not till after the death of Cromwell. He took care, by degrees, to weed the army in Scotland, of such officers, as were most outrageously attached to the republic, and replace them with others of a cooler disposition, and more devoted to himself; and, afterward, set out with his army on a march for London. Most people thought he had his eye on the crown, or at least on the protectorship; it was however impossible for any body to penetrate into his designs. Taciturnity had ever made the most distinguishing part of his character, and now seemed to make the whole. One of the armies, which lay northward in England, went aside from his route; and the other, retiring from London, left it open to him, and the superior army under his command. Here the citizens, long disaffected to the king and constitution, but now tired out with the arbitrary tyranny of a usurper, whom they themselves had largely contributed to set up, wishing for any thing rather than a continuance of that tyranny, carried much higher by Cromwell, than by any of their kings, even by the conqueror; and the rump of a parliament, disgusted at the insignificance to which they had been reduced by an armed force at the discretion of the usurper; without much difficulty acceded to the intentions of Monk, then unmasked, to call home the king, and re-establish the constitution, king, bishops, liturgy, and all. All parties, whereof there were three, outrageously hating one another; and all sects, whereof there were thirty or forty, all furiously inspired, now seeing the sword pointed the contrary way, now weary of

murder and plunder, submitted, some cheerfully, and more prudently; and thus it was, that with the blessing of God, the silence of one man imposed silence on the drum, the trumpet, and the cannon; nay, for some time, and in some degree, on the inspiration and prophecy, which grew so far ashamed of themselves, as to make way for profanation and atheism. That which had been taken for religion, having been tricked out in a fool's coat, all bespattered with blood, and now grown ragged, was beheld with a mixture of ridicule and horror, wherein the true religion, for want of discernment, even in the lowest degree, was doomed to partake.

150. Whoever goes to law goes into a glass-house, where he understands little or nothing of what is doing; where he sees a small matter, blown up into fifty times the size of its intrinsic contents, and through which, if he can perceive any other objects, he perceives them all discoloured and distorted; where every thing is too brittle to bear handling; where, as in an element of fire, he frets, fumes, and is drained at every pore; and where whatever he buys, he buys out of the fire, and pays for according to its factitious bulk. It had been perhaps better for him to have been contented with an earthen vessel.

151. Among mankind there are a few, whose exalted talents entitle them to the characters of genii; a few also, so low in point of capacity, as to be but little raised above idiotism; the rest, in respect of parts, are found between these in gradations, too minute to afford more than almost imperceptible distinctions. In the first, passions, equal in force at least to their talents, and often superior, rouse them to uncommon exertions, attended with extraordinary degrees of moral good, or evil; and with correspondent degrees of happiness, or misery. They dance on a straight rope, raised high above the ground. If they can keep their place, in the midst of great agility, and with motions free and graceful, they are admired by those below as a sort of prodigies; but they cannot fall without being dashed to pieces. From the lowest class nothing is expected, but that they should creep on the ground, through a despicable course of life. If however they cannot rise, it is as certain they cannot fall. The genii affect to give the title of humdrums to the middle rank of men, who make up the bulk of our species. If these are never very happy, they are never very miserable. If one of them attempts to mount the straight rope, which often happens, when he aims at poetry, poli-

tics, or philosophy, his want of agility is so quickly discovered in his dull epigram, his silly harangue, or his weak reasoning, that not only they above, but even they below, hiss him down to his natural stage of mediocrity. Could he be content to keep the rank for which Providence intended him, he might walk safely in his middle path of life, without transports of joy, without severe afflictions; and his insensibility of nature would do more for him, than that which is affected by the stoic. After all, as there is really but a very small difference between the talents of the greatest genius, and those of the least, it would be happy for us all, if our stupid pride would suffer us to be satisfied with the characters of humdrums. Here as much piety and virtue may be attained to as a man is capable of, and God requires no more. Here a contented mind may be carried in the vehicle of an easy fortune, along a low and level path of life, in tranquillity all the way, to peace at the last. Happy would it have been for many a genius, if he had been but a humdrum. Happy too will it be for a much greater number, if God will not in account charge them with all the great talents they conceit themselves in trust for.

152. It is said, and never by the real friends of our religion, that it speaks, in the Scripture, the language of eastern countries and warm climates, figurative and glowing, rather than cool and rational. It is true, it speaks not in the language of Euclid, but in a style intelligible to the understanding, and affecting to the heart. Of all truths, those of our religion are the most rational, the most necessary; and why they should not be also the most sublime and pathetic, no man will assign the shadow of a reason, who does not wish there were no religion in the world. The inhabitants of cold countries stand in great need of somewhat to excite a religious warmth, if, as it is generally thought, they are naturally cold, like their climate. Why should we not wish to have religious warmths transplanted into such inanimate hearts, as well as the fruits of more solar regions, naturalized in our air and soil? Originally, we had no better apple than a crab; nor plum than a sloe; nor any thing even so like a pear. Neither in Italy, nor any where in Europe, were cherries ever heard of, until Lucullus introduced the cherry-tree from Asia. Potatoes, and wheat, are natives of much warmer climates than our own. We are still beholding to them for the immediate production of wine and sugar. If we loved religion but half as well, we should not cavil at its cultivation here, where it may be produced as well as any where

else, merely because its leaves and blossoms strike the eye with more lustre, and regale our olfactories with more refreshing odours, than our indigenous plants. For reasons like these, and perhaps for others less obvious, it was, I verily believe, appointed that the true religion should originate in minds more animated than our own. If religious truth, fully proving its authenticity to reason, should borrow a style and manner, and nothing more it hath borrowed, from nations more alive than ourselves; if from them it hath visited us in more majesty and beauty, than our tardy sensations could lend it; no objections from thence can arise against it, but such as spring from the aversation of a heart which it professes to correct and reclaim. The objectors themselves never kick at an excellent aphorism, because they find it decorated in a poetical garland, bestowed on it by a Homer or a Horace; and why they are not as well pleased with something of superior excellence and utility in a David or Isaiah, I have just assigned the reason. In my humble opinion, this sort of objector might with as much reason cavil at the frequent mention in the Scriptures of dust, because, with us northern people, dirt takes its place; but it would be answer enough, I hope, to say, that we know very well what the dust of drier countries is, and that the inhabitants of those countries are not unacquainted with the dirt of these. The gospel however, intended for universal perusal, though still retaining the energetic force of figures, hath, in a considerable measure, changed the style of our religion from words and phrases to that of things. Beside the use occasionally made by our Saviour of parables, of allusions, and metaphors, he represents the church as his own body, governed by him its head, and actuated by his mind and spirit, throughout all its true and living members. In his language every real Christian dies to sin and this world, is born again to him, and becomes a new creature. By him all mankind are made neighbours to one another, and all Christians become brothers and sisters; and they that believe in him, as members of an immortal body, live for ever; so that what is called death in others, is but sleep in them. To maintain this life in them, they are fed with his flesh and blood, by a figure it is true, yet so as literally and truly to partake all the benefits of his flesh torn, and his blood shed for them. Here is the magazine of provisions for the Christian soldier, enlisted under the banner of Christ, the captain of our salvation, against the devil, the world, and the flesh. Hence it comes, that the life of a Christian is set

forth to us as a warfare, wherein we are to watch, to feed and fight for a crown, which our Lord 'hath prepared for them that love him.' In this state of trial and warfare, the road to this crown is represented as steep and narrow, and our entrance into glory is through a wicket, so very straight, as to be sometimes no wider than the eye of a needle, that no one may hope to pass it, but he who is shrunk in his own opinion to almost nothing. On the other hand, the road to infamy and misery is, in the style of our Saviour, described as all down-hill, and so smooth and wide, that all the multitudes, who choose it, may find room enough for themselves, their coaches, and equipages. Here is a language of infinitely more force and sublimity, than the languages of men. How feeble and insipid in comparison is that of an Eustathius, a Puffendorf, or a Cicero, or Seneca! What fair warning is here given by him who beats up for the volunteers of Christ? If a crown of immortal glory is promised, a long and hard battle must first be fought, and a victory obtained over enemies without, and traitors within us. He that hopes for a parity with angels, and the guardianship of kingdoms and worlds, on easier terms, deceives himself. A soul so dignified and trusted, must first be refined, as in a furnace, tried in the sight of the whole intelligent creation, and found faithful. That the grandeur of this soul may be amply exhibited, and distinguished from the numerous tribe of base and little souls, it is to stand trial before infinite wisdom, and to receive its crown of stars from the hand of infinite Majesty, the whole universe looking on, with heaven open above, and hell below.

153. I hear a great many good sermons, and at the same time, a scarcity of good preaching. I am daily present, where I hear the best prayers in the world uttered, and yet little or no praying. This is owing to a want of spirit in the delivery; and from this want proceeds that coldness, and with it that carelessness, precipitance, and those unsuitable monotonies, which reduce our sermons to nonsense, and our prayers to gibberish. In regard to both, all customary, all affected, all the peculiar tones of this or that man, should be unlearned and laid aside, as the first step to a right pronunciation. If a man of good sense finds himself addicted to any of these faults, he will wish to get rid of them; and his best method will be to read out a good deal of somewhat by himself, without any tone at all, without any rising or falling in his voice. This, I confess, is a wretched sort of reading; but to him

it will prove the only basis of good reading, the only way to get clear of his absurd habit. After he hath once been able to bring himself down to this, he may then be able to vary his tones exactly according to the sense of every thing he reads, with propriety, in order to which he must read so very slowly, as to give time for every accent and emphasis. This variety will relieve the organs of his voice, which would otherwise be soon tired out with a constant uniformity of tones; and will give grace and force to his elocution. The most excellent performance in itself differs not so much from the most despicable, on the ears of an audience, as do a good and bad delivery. All fanatics study tones, as their chief fort, a great deal more than the sense of what they utter, and so to accommodate them to vulgar ears, as to carry all before them, although their tones strike wholly wide of nature. Now were those of a rational speaker adjusted to propriety and nature, like the substance of the matter he utters, great and happy would be the effect. The word of God himself in the mouth of a reader, who does not understand it, nor enter into its spirit, *incipit esse suum*, and sinks to something below a dead letter. The sermon too, if the preacher hath not made it his own by understanding its drift, and enforcing the several parts of it with accents, actions, and looks, judiciously adapted, degenerates into mere chaff and froth. As to our most admirable Liturgy, so warm throughout, but not flighty; so wisely diversified, as to engage the attention on ten thousand repetitions; so suited to the principles and spirit of our holy religion; so closely employed in soliciting at the hands of God the greatest of all blessings, at the time that we deserve nothing, but his severest judgments; and in sending up our warmest praises for all his undeserved patience, mercy, and bounty to us; if this is gabbled over by a senseless and devotionless blockhead, it turns to an impious insult on the Majesty of heaven. Oh! when shall we see an end of this blasphemy in its most aggravating circumstances? An actor, on the stage, though in the service perhaps of criminal pleasure, labours for propriety and emphasis. The lawyer, to acquire the character of a powerful speaker, and for a paltry fee, exerts himself at the bar, as if his life were at stake, for a cause of but little moment, even in the estimation of his worldly-minded hearers. But the cause of God and eternity, the question, whether a soul shall go to heaven or hell, is handled in the house of God, and the presence of Christ, as the most insignificant trifle, wherein neither

the man, who preaches and prays, nor the people, are at all concerned. One sleeps, another chats to the next sitter, and another bows and grins to some fool at a distance. But they are at church; and that is enough for him who bought them with his blood, and is to judge them. If the lawyer so strenuously contends for his guinea, is heaven a less fee for the clergyman? If the lawyer roars and sweats for a character among the attending crowd, why shall not much rather the minister of God labour for a character among the best of men, and among the host of heaven? The word of God, as it lies printed in a book, continues to be but a dead letter, and on the tongue of an unfeeling reader, passes for an unmeaning sound, until the spirit of the speaker goes with it. Then it is that he speaks above himself, that he breathes the air of heaven, and his animated soul touches the souls of his hearers with fire from the altar of God. He glows with sacred warmth, and they are kindled. Why are we brought together in our public services, but that, like fewel accumulated, we may burn and blaze upward together? There is a unison of souls, which spreads itself from tear to tear, and from heart to heart, at a well acted tragedy. Why is it not felt in the house of God, on Good Friday, when the death of him who gave his blood for our sins, the infinite tragedy of all tragedies, is celebrated? Can it originate from any better source than the Spirit of God, or communicate itself through any other channel than that of the man appointed by the church to utter the Scriptures, to preach the sermon, and offer up the addresses of a congregation, all deeply impressed with a grateful, but woful sense of what is doing? Ye unfeeling wretches, minister, and people, fly from such celebrations. Ye have no business there. Fly back to the world, where you left your worthless hearts, and let the 'stone out of the wall' in God's house, and 'the beam out of the timber,' cry aloud, Woe to him, who builds on the earth, and forgets the Saviour of his soul. Woe to him, who hath a tear, neither for his own sins, nor for him, who died to atone for them. Woe to the goat-herd first, and then to his sinister flock.

154. A close conformity with the established religion of our country, if it enjoins nothing contrary to, nor withholds any thing made necessary to salvation by, the word of God, is a duty so essential to both the principles and spirit of our religion, that not to communicate with it, is to renounce both. As to its principles, it is a leading axiom, that Christ is the Prince of peace, that

his religion is the peace of God, and that he came to settle peace among mankind, first, religious, and by that, every other species of peace. And as to its spirit, let us attend to what the Holy Ghost hath said. 'I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, be ye like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife, or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.' This injunction is laid upon our consciences purely because the necessary things to be judged of, are made too plain to be mistaken by common sense, insomuch, that dissensions among Christians never did, never can proceed from any thing else, but tempers and designs, wholly alien from the Christian spirit. 'By this,' saith Christ, 'shall all men know, that ye are my disciples, if you love one another.' Can they then be the disciples of Christ, who so hate one another, that although they judge alike in the fundamentals of his religion, will not celebrate his service in the same house, nor the memorials of his death at the same table? He himself is love, and his religion is love. By what infernal art is it then, that his religion is made a pretence for substituting hatred in the place of that love? Such hatred too, as hath frequently dipped our swords in the blood of one another? Infidels are ever ready to foment our quarrels, to cast them in our teeth, and to make sport of them, as a thorough refutation of all our professions. The crime of dissension must lie somewhere, either at the door of the established church, or at that of such as differ from it. Now, as to the establishment, in England and Ireland, it differs not in its creed or confession of faith from that which our dissenting brethren drew up for themselves at Westminster; and, therefore, there was, then at least, no reason in regard to principle for any division. But our dissenters so hated the government of the church by bishops, though the plain appointment of Christ and the Holy Spirit, that nothing could please them but a new kind of government, of their own invention, wherein the laity might have a share. They also took offence at our Liturgy, though compiled of all that piety which had warmed the church from the days of Christ to the time of the Reformation; though exactly modelled by, and mixed with, the

holy Scriptures; and though thoroughly purged of Popery and superstition. To this they were led by violent pretensions to inspiration, exhibited in extemporary prayers and preachings, now absolutely exploded by every body of common sense and honesty among them, excepting by new upstart sects, which, for a time carry off from them and us a number of very giddy people. Since the first establishment of Christianity under Constantine, no other service of equal purity so conformable to the word of God, to Christian charity, or to sound reason, hath ever been known, in any country under heaven, as that of England and Ireland. Although it stood in need of no defence, it hath been so amply defended, that no church ever afforded the dissenters from it so little pretence or excuse. Yet justice must be done to the sincerity of such as openly follow another way of worship, compared with whom, the dissenters who go to church, and nevertheless seldom communicate with it, but rail at it, and use their utmost endeavours to undermine and overthrow it, are certainly the most detestable of mankind. To this they are led by a species of infidelity, proceeding from, as they think it, the too expensive support of the established clergy, which they see, in too great a measure, sacrificed to pride and luxury. Bad as the choice is that is made for the ministry of young illiterate puppies, crowding into the church for a morsel of bread, and obtruded by their atheistical families; far worse would it be, if the people themselves were to choose their clergy; and then such bickerings and bloodshed would attend that choice, as often did in more impartial times than these, when the most ignorant of the laity took upon them to judge for the church. If, at any rate, we are to have an insufficient and degenerate succession of clergy, it is best to have it quietly. In an age like this, when the mass, out of which the ministry must be made, is so enormously corrupted, it is rather wonderful that we have any good clergyman among us (and some we have), than that we have so few. The constitution of a church is to be considered, and not the behaviour of its clergy, when conformity with it, or nonconformity, is under deliberation. A clergy duly authorized to preach God's word, and administer his sacraments, in a church well constituted, demand conformity on principles, not to be shaken by their particular defects, while they continue themselves to act in conformity to the stated rules of its constitution. At different times, they may be a very different kind of men, or may be thought so by their people, though they are still but the

same. The constitution of the church, however, being uniformly the same, hath uniformly the same divine right to the conformity of all who live in the country where such church is established. The clergy are but men, and have their gifts in frail and 'earthen vessels.' To conform or dissent therefore on account of their private and particular behaviour, is to pay no respect to Christ, the head of every church, at least of every church constituted on his principles, and founded on his authority. Conformity in matters of religion should be the effect of three things, first, a sound and candid judgment, regulated by the word of God, without any mixture of fancy or prejudice; secondly, a peaceable and charitable disposition, for peace and charity are among the very first essentials of Christianity; and, thirdly, obedience to the Almighty Source of order and power. Nothing can apologise for dissension from the established church of any country, but a constitutional departure of that church from these principles whereby it is to be examined and judged of. Whenever it is forgotten, that the church of Christ is a society, whereof he himself is the sole head; whenever his disciples cease to be social in regard to one another; or at all prefer their own humours and tempers to his authority; they cease to be his disciples, and fly asunder into divisions, equally wild, uncharitable, and rebellious, in regard to him. At the council of Trent, forced on the pope by the emperor, the king of France, and the loud call for reformation of almost the whole Christian world, the pope attempted, by his creatures in that assembly, to have the bishops decreed, *non jure divino*, but in this was disappointed. In the mean time, the cry of Calvinists was, No king, no bishop. Accordingly, they established a republican form of government, both in church and state, wherever they had it in their power. These attempts of the pope and Calvinists, so alarmed the kings and bishops, as to put a stop to the intended reformation, how little to the credit of all the parties concerned, may be easily judged. Since that, the work of reformation hath been left to individuals, sometimes, but not always, duly qualified for the undertaking. Although in all sorts and sects among us there is a general falling off from the principles and spirit of Christianity, yet among our dissenters there are so many men so sound in the former, and so warm in the latter, that it may still be reasonably hoped, they may yet be prevailed on by the Prince of Peace to join with the established church, in which their piety is much wanted. Piety and peace

should go together. Truth and charity should never be found asunder in the breast of a Christian. They ought to find in this union a sweet encouragement from the nature of our Liturgy, whereof all the prayers and addresses are offered up to the throne of grace in and through Jesus Christ, our only Mediator, with the Father, who saith, ' Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, believing, ye shall receive ;' whereas few of their present ministers remember, in their extemporary prayers, the mediatorial power, with the Father, of a Son, in whose Divinity they do not believe. If there are any such among us (and it is thought there are many), the prescript form of our Liturgy, from which they cannot, dare not depart, the efficacy of Christian prayer stands forth in its full force for the devotion of every real Christian. Come, dearly beloved in Christ, let the love of God towards you, which passeth all understanding of divines and statesmen, and your love of him, which should be suitable to his, beget in you, that uniform charity towards us, your Christian brethren, which is the very soul of our religion, ' which thinketh no ill, which believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.' Are not you and we worshippers of the same God? Have we not one and the same book of God to guide us therein? Have we not one Father, one Saviour, one Comforter? Are not our hearts animated by one Spirit? Or is that Spirit divided? Can he be a Spirit of love in one man, and a Spirit of hatred in another? How then can we keep at a distance from one another in that very office of life wherein we ought to be most closely united? How did the primitive Christians, persecuted by Jews and Pagans, wish for the happy privilege of serving God, which we enjoy, without disturbance from the enemies of Christ? And do we enjoy it, only to disturb and distract it? Only to tear in pieces the body of Christ for petty differences in opinion, which, on both sides, we confess to be insignificant trifles, in comparison of those saving fundamentals, in which we are perfectly agreed? Foreigners think us the most factious people on earth in point of politics, the most apt to complain of our laws, and the administration of them, though we are our own legislators. Yet we crowd to the courts of law and justice; sit with one another on either jury; do right or wrong with unanimity; assemble at the theatre or tavern; buy and sell to one another; as if we had forgotten our schismatical divisions, I hope, not often, as if we had left our very religion behind us. Strange! that we should shew ourselves, notwithstanding our factious dis-

positions, so much better subjects to our king and laws, than servants to God. Forbid it, common sense, that we should be dissatisfied with religion, because we had not the making of it for ourselves, which indeed seems to be the wish of those, who, in every age, are for casting it over again in a model of their own, though they acknowledge that God is its author. Undoubtedly, he hath never listened either to Christ, or his gospel, who doth not, in his practice acknowledge, that peace, charity, and uniformity, compose one of its primary and most essential articles.

155. 'He,' saith Solomon, 'that oppresseth the poor, reproacheth his Maker,' the Maker of the poor, as if his poverty were a disgrace to the creation, wherein the poor man holds so low and contemptible a place, that one, who, but a man like himself, is able to tread him down into the mire. But doth not the oppressor still more flagrantly reproach and even blaspheme his own Maker, for having sent such a monster into being? God is the Maker both of the rich and poor, who meet here together for the trial of both; not but that the one frequently makes himself poor, and the other, rich; so that God having made the men, leaves them to make, in some measure, their own fortunes. It is true, however, that he who honoureth God, hath mercy on the poor, because he considers him as bearing the image of his Maker by nature, and still more by grace; for, in this very instance, his resemblance is still greater to his Saviour, who chose to be poor.

156. It is a fine saying, that it is human to err; but divine, to confess one's error. The word divine, here is taken in a qualified sense. To see truth is the highest proof of a sound understanding; but in an argument or debate, to see it, when coming from the mouth of an opponent, is yet a higher proof of this soundness; and to own it for such, proves, that, for the love of truth, the man can conquer and blow away his own pride, than which there is nothing more apt to cloud the faculties of an otherwise rational creature.

157. We are too apt to misjudge the dispensations of Providence, when we weigh them with our own wishes. The refractory heart would needs be left to its own way, though too blind to see a single step of it. A religious widow of my acquaintance, had two sons, grown up men, of whom she was very fond, and indeed a little proud; and two daughters, not much less dear to their worthy mother. Her two sons, going out one Sunday morning, with a design not justifiable on any other day, were drowned.

It was as much as her strong sense of religion could do, to carry her over this heavy affliction. Sometime after this, when her Christian resignation had began to blunt the sting of her misery, in spite of all her remonstrances, her eldest daughter married a poor profligate young man. Her second daughter, tired with the company of a too admonitory mother, as she thought her, went to live with the young couple; and soon proved with child to her brother-in-law; the married sister, dreading the tyranny of her husband, allowing them to sleep together in one room. On this, the unhappy mother said to me, 'Oh, sir! I thought death the most terrible of all things, when I lost my two fine young men in one day; but now I feel the sweetness of death. O that my two daughters had gone to the bottom with my two sons!'

158. A new and enlarged edition of Chambers's Dictionary, is now publishing here in Dublin, which, among other things, is to serve as an almanack of opinions, particularly in matters of religion. Here it is, that the readers of scraps, of newspapers, magazines, reviews, &c. apt enough to go astray without such aids afforded them, as occur in many parts of this voluminous work, find the subject of demoniacks handled as wholly fabulous, and consequently exorcism, recorded in the gospel, as an imposition on the credulity of Christians; the government of the church by bishops as nothing better than usurpation; and the proof of our religion by prophecies, though at first speciously applauded, yet, immediately afterward, whiffled away into almost nothing between Collins and Surenhusius, with the aid of Whiston. Here it is, that the giddy reader is led away by a treacherous infidel in the mask of a bigoted Presbyterian, whom he is to take for a clergyman of some sort, that his fallacies may pass the more readily in disguise. The prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Christ are artfully represented as altogether figurative, allegorical, and not applicable, but by somewhat like a cabala. That some of those prophecies are figuratively, nay even obscurely, expressed, on set purpose, and for wise and good reasons, that nothing, but the accomplishment might explain them; and that for other reasons, equally wise and good, an event, soon to happen, is pointed to, as a type of another, more important, but more distant in time; we readily acknowledge. That in some prophecies from the Old Testament, referred to in the New, it is sometimes said, that such or such a thing is done, in order that this or that prophecy might be fulfilled, hath been long ago, and now again ob-

jected in this insidious book, as if Christ and his apostles had artfully thrust themselves into a specious accomplishment of the prophecy, though that accomplishment was, in most instances, a thing above the power of man to perform, and attended with numbers of other acts, far above the agency of all created beings. Allowing however, that every thing, especially of this high nature, was done only to fulfil the prophecies, how can this derogate from the proof intended to be drawn from prophecy? Is it not most reasonable, that Providence should so dispose events, as to fulfil its own predictions, especially when those predictions are promissory, the very essence of all that relate to the Messiah? The Jews had best beware of insinuating this idle objection to the evangelists, since they may see it avowed by Ezra in the very first verse of his book, that Providence concerns itself to bring about such events in the course of this world, as shall accomplish its own prophecies and promises. It would be very strange, if the Omniscient and Almighty Governor of the world should never give previous warning of what he means to do among mankind; and stranger still, if after having given such warning, he should not provide events suitable to his own predictions. It ill becomes even a pretended minister of the gospel to retail the arguments of known infidels against that gospel, especially as he must be sensible, that arguments so flimsy can serve no other purpose, but that of staggering the faith of very weak and illiterate people. This deceitful writer goes on to charge those of the New Testament, not only with accommodations, but perversions of various other prophecies; and begins with Acts iii. 23, where St. Peter cites a prophecy of Moses concerning Christ, most accurately, both in words and meaning, from Deut. xviii. Then he proceeds to Acts vii. 43, where St. Stephen quotes Amos v. 25, with equal exactness, only the Raiphan of the Septuagint is called Remphan by Stephen, a name differently pronounced by the Jews, who neither then knew, nor now know, how to pronounce a single word of the Hebrew. As to Stephen's putting Babylon for Damascus, it does not in the smallest degree alter the sense, as the prophecy hath been strictly fulfilled in regard to both places. He proceeds to 1 Cor. xv. 54, where the sense of the prophecy by Isa. xxv. is completely taken, and not a syllable altered, but what is necessary in the mere form of application. He next instances 2 Cor. viii. 15, where St. Paul, preserving the precise sense of the words, Exod. xvi. 18, abridges the expressions, but

keeps close to the principal terms. He next insists on Rom. ix. 33, where St. Paul refers to two prophecies of Isaiah, chap. viii. 14, concerning Christ as a stumbling-stone to the Jews, and chap. xxviii. 16, as a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation, both verified in fact, pursuant to the intendment of the prophecy, and the application of the apostle. What misapplication this miserable dabbler could see in St. Paul's saying, 1 Cor. xi. 9, 'that the man was not made for the woman, but the woman for the man,' pursuant to Gen. ii. 18, no mortal can guess. The thing set forth by Moses and him is no prophecy, but a fact. Heb. viii. 9, is so exactly, verbatim cited from Jer. xxxi. 32, and so completely fulfilled by the new covenant in Christ, that nothing less than the very distraction of this infidel could find an objection to it. Heb. x. 5, to which this deceiver ought to have added the several verses that follow, all which St. Paul applies from Psal. xl. 6, 7, &c. to Christ, and reasons from them, with the utmost precision. Acts xiii. 41. These words of St. Paul to a congregation of Jews and Gentiles are applied by Habakkuk to Gentiles only, by St. Paul to both, but more sharply to the Jews, as, on that occasion, more blind and contemptuous than the Gentiles. What an outcry of infidels, to corrupt the ignorant, about the wrong interpretation and application of prophecies to Christ! And behold these singled out by his enemy, from all the rest, as most unfairly applied by his apostles and evangelists to him and his religion, admit not of the smallest objection, in point of meaning, and of almost none even in regard to the words! All the grounds this despicable retailer of infidelity builds on, are the Hebrew points, and some alterations of Hebrew words, which men of sense and learning hold in the utmost contempt, and rely on the Septuagint, which the writers of the New Testament quote in all his catalogue of texts, and almost every where throughout that sacred volume; perhaps I ought rather to say, absolutely every where. The Septuagint is authenticated, not only by its antiquity, and its intelligible genuineness, but by Christ himself, and all his immediate followers, as incomparably preferable to the Hebrew copies, whereof hardly any thing in their time, and still less in ours, is sufficiently understood, to be depended on. It would be weakness to multiply words any farther on so scurvy an attempt; but I at the same time insist, that many of the aforesaid prophecies are too plain and literal to be mistaken as to their intendment. Of this latter sort I shall cite a few out of many, that the rational

reader may see, how unfairly and treacherously he is dealt with by such writers. 'In thy seed,' saith God to Abraham, 'shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' Where is the figure, or allegory here? 'The sceptre,' saith dying Jacob, 'shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh, the messenger of peace, shall come.' It is true that sceptre here signifies some sort of power or government, but so familiarly, as not to need a cabalistical explication. Moses tells the Israelites that God shall send them a prophet of their brethren, like unto him, and charges them to hear that prophet. Not one of their prophets, before Christ, was a lawgiver, like unto Moses, nor inculcated any other law but that by Moses, which could not be like, because it was precisely the same. Was this promise figurative, or this prophecy allegorical? Job saith, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand upon the earth at the latter day,' &c. What figure or obscurity is found in these words? It could not be to David himself, that these words were said, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry,' &c. In the twenty-second Psalm, where the sufferings, and in the seventy-second, where the triumphs of Christ are foreseen and described, in some extent, all is literal, and hath been literally accomplished. 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,' or the grave, 'nor suffer thy Holy One to see corruption;' words uttered in the sixteenth Psalm in the person of Christ, and literally true of him, but not of David, or any other man. In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, the sufferings of Christ for us are as plainly and pathetically dilated, as by any of the evangelists, who were witnesses of the facts. Daniel foretells the time of his coming and dying, by seventy weeks of years, as natural and literal a computation of time, as weeks of days, and so well understood by the Jews, contemporary with Christ, that their not universally receiving of the Messiah was by no means owing to any misconception of the time, for they all expected him at that very time, but to their ambitious opinion, that his kingdom was to be of this world. In the eleventh chapter of Zechariah, we find a literal and very particular prophecy of Christ is mentioned; 'They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter, a goodly price, that I was prized at of them;' and the

pieces were cast unto the potter, in the house of the Lord, by the prophet, who, in that part of the prophecy, represented, both Judas and the sanhedrim. How circumstantial! Whither had fled the understanding of the atheistical high-priest and sanhedrim, when they did not so much as think of frustrating the effect of this prophecy by offering to the avarice of Judas one or two pieces more? In the multitude of prophecies concerning our blessed Saviour, particularly of the evangelical prophet, I might enumerate many more, as plain and literal as the former; but these may suffice to shew what I intended to prove in this paragraph, that he is plainly and clearly pointed out by the prophets, as well by strictly grammatical, as by figurative predictions, which latter however can be fairly interpreted of none, but him. After all, I am perfectly sensible this mode of proof will have no effect on the enemies of our holy religion, who shut their eyes against the light; but may be of some use to such as mean well, yet through ignorance and weakness are liable to the seductions of artifice and cunning. That the Jews did, and still do expect a Messiah, relying on the prophecies of the Old Testament alone, is known to all men; and that therefore those prophecies were always sufficiently intelligible to them, and consequently may be so to others, is a truth which no arts of the devil, or his agents, will ever be able to invalidate. This great and most important truth is not left to rest on one or two predictions, liable to misinterpretation, but on so great a number, and expressed in so great a variety of ways, and all pointing so uniformly to the single event, as to forestal a possibility, with unprejudiced reason, of mistaking the purport in view, when they were recorded. To wind up this short argument, let the reader hear Isa. xxxv. 4—6; 'Behold your God shall come with vengeance, even God with a recompense, he will come and save you; then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.' Ibid. lxi. 1; 'The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings,' or the gospel, 'unto the meek.' When John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to Christ, saying, 'Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again what things ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor

have the gospel preached to them.' Behold here a literal prophecy of certain facts impossible to human apprehension, and yet literally accomplished, and then appealed to by our Lord, as proofs of his Messiahship in the sight and hearing of a multitude, crowding round him for the benefit of these miracles! It is most evident, that his reference to this prophecy, whereof John, his precursor, could not be ignorant, was intended for a satisfactory answer to the inquiry made by the messengers, satisfactory, I mean, not so much to John as to the messengers, and the people present, the purport of the inquiry having been known to John long before.

159. I have often thought the fine lines of Horace, borrowed from Isaiah, *Olim truncus eram*, &c. might, though with great diminution of their brilliancy, be paraphrased, and applied to the image-worshippers among our pretended Christians, in some such manner as the following.

Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum,
Cum faber incertus, scamnum faceretve, Petrumve,
Malluit auriculis lignosis vota Quiritum
Audire, et magnæ fieri Dictator alumnæ.

Of useless timber I an image fram'd,
Am now, by courtesy, saint Peter nam'd,
And set aloft, with but a wooden ear,
The pious prayers of mighty Rome to hear;
Yet more still, I, with wooden lips, from thence,
Unerring dictates o'er the world dispense.

160. For lack of objections to Christianity, and invectives against its author, his enemies have charged him with neither encouraging friendship by rewards, nor inculcating rules for its regulation; and it hath been answered, that he hath personally set an example of friendship in his affection for the apostle St. John, who stands distinguished in the gospel by the title of the disciple, whom Jesus loved. If he was not farther particular on the subject, it was probably because he would not countenance such friendships as we are too apt to give into on mistaken and often unjustifiable motives. He called all his disciples his friends, and friends to one another by his lovely injunction, that they should love one another, and by that love distinguish themselves among mankind, as ever ready to lay down their lives for their brethren, in imitation of him who laid down his life for them all. 'Greater love hath no man, than that of laying down his life for another.

It was the intention of our blessed Teacher to discountenance our own narrow-hearted partialities and attachments. It was his purpose so to enlarge our affections, as that we should love all men as our neighbours, and all Christians, as our brothers and sisters. The distinctions of Jew, Gentile, and Samaritan; of bond and free; of Greek and Barbarian; of rich and poor; of high and low; were by him to be removed, and swallowed up in a universal charity. God was to be loved with all our hearts and souls, and our neighbours as ourselves. The 'friendship of this world' was to be considered as 'enmity with God;' and so extensive was the love inculcated by him, that I cannot help thinking, he saw with a disapproving eye the contracted particularities wherein one man is preferred, and all the rest of the human race left out, at best, as indifferents. We are commanded by St. Peter to 'have fervent charity among ourselves;' and fervent indeed it ought to be, but the Greek word εκτενη for which our translation puts, fervent, signifies rather extensive, as that which is so widely stretched as to cover the multitude of sins, whether committed by ourselves or others, in order to mutual or divine forgiveness.

161. Our infidels discover a very low kind of spite in crying up the Koran, as not unfrequently they do, with some air of preference to the Gospel. All impostors are a-kin. Mahomet affected no small respect for Christianity; and they, to save the like appearances, do the same in Christian countries, labouring to undermine it by artifice, as he did to oppress it by force and power. Had they been to suffer under the cruel and rapacious hands of this Arab, they would have applauded the meekness and charity of Christ, as more accommodated to their selfish wishes, than to any similarity of heart, for they are deceivers, and when it is in their power, oppressors, not less unfeeling than Mahomet himself. Christ sent forth his apostles to suffer for the lovely religion they published to the world. Mahomet sent out his apostles in steel, as Mr. West expresses it in one of his sermons, to plunder and murder all that had either a property or life to lose. Hypocrisy and cruelty were united in his system, and it prospered in a world too readily disposed to share the spoil of a feeble resistance. Such were the Turks, a barbarous northern nation, who, in search of plunder, broke in upon Persia, Syria, &c. These men, having little or no religion of any sort, before their migration, and finding Christianity and Mahometism in the countries they invaded, did not like the former as too passive for their purpose, and therefore

embraced the latter, as a religion of the sword, and perfectly suited to their views of plunder and murder. Mahomet, sensible of this advantage in his scheme, and knowing that the Jews in general had rejected Christ for no other reason, but because they saw in him no prospect of their expected plunder; contrived a sort of religion, well adapted to the wishes of the Arabs, and of all other nations, addicted to violence and rapine. To them Providence gave up the eastern Christians, almost universally debauched, and little better than Christians in name only. To them, too, Providence resigned the eastern idolaters, for these apostles speciously preached, with the points of their swords, the worship of one God only, and abstinence from wine. It was no objection to, but rather a recommendation of their religion, that it gave an almost unbounded licence to lewdness, and even promised the indulgence of it in heaven as a reward for the merit of rapine on earth. Wine was forbidden, because intoxication is an enemy to success in wars; but women were offered, as the most inviting article of plunder, and the most likely temptation to increase the number of proselytes, especially in the warmer climates, where this horrid species of imposture first took place. Christianity considers intemperance in drinking as not only highly criminal in itself, but as the parent of all other vices. Christianity considers ambition as ruinous to the kingdom of Christ, and avarice and concupiscence as idolatry. Our infidels are, in practice, warm adherents of Mahomet in regard to ambition, avarice, and concupiscence; but leave him behind, when they go to a tavern. His own most bigoted followers, of the same stamp with his admirers here, do the same, but secretly as men who hold him for a cheat, when his doctrines oppose their inclinations. Predestination is a principle, too favourable to the ferocity of robbers and murderers, often exposed to danger, and too indulgent to all other vices, to be left out of a system, whose professors would rather charge God with their crimes, than suffer them to lie heavy on their consciences, as the voluntary produce of their own hearts. Of all the instances wherein the pretences of religion, or fanaticism, have been opened as a fountain of the most enormous wickedness, this was the most remarkable, and attended with the most lasting and extensive mischiefs. That practised by Cromwell was, in every respect a close imitation of it; but, to the happiness of these nations, was soon got under; and, to the happiness of the neighbour-nations, did not spread so far, though not a few of his military instruments, all prophets,

believed they were appointed to conquer the whole world. This was absolutely taken for granted by such as were landed on the continent, to aid the French against the then formidable power of Spain. Of these it was the common boast, that any one of them was a match for five other men. They thought themselves sure of erecting a fifth monarchy, greater than all the former four, had they all subsisted together in one.

162. Every Protestant knows, and, I trust, the time is hastening forwards when every Papist, recovering the use of common sense, shall consider why the word of God hath been shut up by the church of Rome from the generality of her members, and never opened to any, but on a strong assurance of bigotry in the licensed. The palpable breach of God's two commandments, and the shameful purchase of indulgences for the transgression of all the rest, to say nothing of many other gross enormities, both in principle and practice, held forth as standing doctrines by that church, too glaringly oppose the express, the repeated commands and precepts of God's word, to suffer among them the laudable liberty taken by the Bereans of searching 'the Scriptures, whether these things are so' in the word of God, as they are held in the church of Rome. The same impious freedom cannot be taken amidst reformers, by Arians and Socinians; but they take another, of still worse consequence, with the holy Scriptures. They impudently impose their own sense on every passage that seems to militate against them; but if it is too refractory to be speciously forced, then its genuineness is to be disputed. If this too in some particulars (and there are many such) appears to be unfeasible, then the Scriptures are represented to their friends the Deists, and to the unlearned, as too corrupt, on the whole, to be trusted. Whiston, one of their chiefs, a man of much reading, and of no judgment, hath laboured to serve them in this their latter purpose, by representing the whole Old Testament, where are found some of the strongest proofs of Christ's divinity, as so corrupted by the Jews, in both the Hebrew and the Greek, that there is no depending on it without a cabalistic method of construction. Here they vilify the Scriptures, because the Scriptures condemn their opinions. Common sense, nevertheless, easily refutes the charge, for all the prophets, as they are still read in both Hebrew and Greek, in some hundreds of places, plainly prove Jesus to be the Messiah, and fix the time of his coming into the world. Nay, the Jews to this day insist, that God himself was

not to be the Messiah. For a double reason therefore it is evident, that the Jews have by no means so corrupted the prophets, as to give Whiston this pretence, or the orthodox any advantage. It is true, they have here and there nibbled at corruptions, but hardly ever of prophecies concerning the Messiah. Their expectation of him, as well since as before his coming as a mighty conqueror, and a universal monarch, hath effectually prevented all attempts of that kind in regard to him, nothing being more likely to frustrate their hopes than lowering his character, or rendering his coming doubtful.

163. Fashion is not always useless. The shaving of our beards, given to distinguish a man from a woman, and to add a little majesty to an effeminate or scurvy countenance, I find, since I grew old, enables me to pass for somewhat younger, and less disgusting, than otherwise I could do, although it is contrary to nature, and a sort of insult on my Maker. It makes however some apology for my folly with those who are not near enough to see my wrinkles. A long beard, wagging under a mouthful of nonsense, is a most piteous sight; and if I must talk like a fool, it is some excuse to look like one. It is certain that both I, and my acquaintances, suffer by my shaving, for I say a thousand things, which I should be ashamed to say over a long and hoary beard; so, if I want a monitor, I have an apology. But why should I talk? If I am a fool, how can I hold my tongue? In case others, not much wiser than myself, would talk eternally, whether one so deaf can hear them, or not, I may be taken for a greater fool than I am, by saying yes, or no, in the wrong place. Nobody will ask me, what matter is it if I should be taken for a fool, because the question might pinch himself. If at any time I speak sense, it is on a religious subject; but it is then I am heard with the greatest contempt by my brethren the clergy, and by the younger sort of people. My beard, at full length, would not be more out of fashion than my principles with both. But to account for my principles I am a sincere Christian, and to account for my talking so much in defence of them it is enough to say, that I imbibed them long ago, and that I am just now pretty far gone in the seventy-ninth year of my life.

164. It hath long been a question among metaphysicians, whether God hath so constituted the natural world as to subsist of itself, without the necessity of his supporting hand, perpetually interfering with causes and effects, to keep them in the regular

train, wherein they were originally appointed to succeed one another; or whether they are not every moment upheld and guided by the power of their Maker. Much hath been said for the former opinion; and not a great deal less for the latter, as created natures seem incapable of independency, and as a derivative independency seems to imply a sort of contradiction. Yet as a proper independency is by no means intended in the former opinion; as it is on all hands maintained, that God can, when he will, suspend or alter the course of nature in the material world; and, as when natural causes, which continually happen, come to interfere with morality, in which case the actual and occasional support of the Deity, given to a bad man in the very perpetration of a wicked action, would infer a sort of concurrence in God to sin; this opinion, I think, must be given up, and Divine Providence must be confined to the moral world, excepting when the course of things in the natural may be so altered or directed, as to give aid in the suppression of vice, and promotion of virtue. It is true, all things do, and did from the beginning, consist by Christ, particularly the law of God, and of man, as a free and moral creature, which could not be, if in his original make he had not a power to obey, or transgress. Here as great consistency, as in any other part of the creation, is evident by the rewards conferred, and the punishments inflicted, by those laws on man. As to the system of natural things, if philosophy cannot find out the second causes, whereby its attractions, repulsions, magnetism, &c. are carried on, it does by no means follow, that there are no such second causes; nor that the Deity must himself immediately, by his own agency, produce the effects, such as gravitation, &c. for in that case, he would be supposed to concur with sin, and help, in the very act, the man who is murdering his father, by giving him, in the very instant, all the power he hath to perpetrate the horrid deed. No, it is more reasonable surely to believe, that God, by the original nature of this man, gave him a power to cherish, or destroy, his father; and left it to the freedom of his will, to choose which of the two he should do. It is one thing to say, that God, by the original make of a man, hath put it in his power to do a great deal of good, or a great deal of mischief; and quite another to say, that after the man hath willed the most atrocious deed, his good Maker should aid him in the execution of it, which looks a little too like saying, that the good Being wills the deed, as well as the wicked man. This consideration forces

my reason to believe, that, in the natural world, the stated course of effects, whether as to men, or the other parts of the creation, was put under the influence of second causes, most of them inscrutable to human understanding, and probably to the angelic also. But angels and men are so left to the exercise of their freedom, as to be able, if they please, to do good or evil, without any compulsion either way from the power or operation of such second causes. On the contrary, these second causes are the instruments or powers, by which the will of a free being acts according to its choice. Man may abuse his freedom, and the second causes, or circumstances wherein he is placed; but it cannot be supposed, that God, either in the original appointment of the second causes, or at the time the man is disposed to that abuse, should aid him in so doing, by any means, or in any sense of the word, since at that very time he forbids the abuse under the severest penalty, and aids his obedience with his Holy Spirit. Here is room sufficient, and a proper scene, for the interference of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, in the government of God's intelligent and free creatures; and here they are all exercised in such a manner as not to destroy, but aid our freedom, when a right choice of thought or action is to be enlivened, or carried into execution. If a man hath only common sense, he must have found himself to be but a very weak creature, assaulted by enemies too artful to be guarded against by one so little apt to be vigilant; too powerful to be resisted by one so ready to yield; so surrounded by dangers, evil accidents, sickness, storms by sea, fires at land, distractions, deaths, and perils among false brethren; in the midst of all this, how sweet a consolation can he administer to himself by his faith in the protecting hand of God, who careth for him, who is ever present with him, and is mighty to save him, by night when he is wrapped up in sleep, like a caterpillar in his nympha-state, and by day, when he mounts the dangerous stage of life, and takes the field against the host of hell, against a seducing world, against his own corrupted and treacherous heart! Against 'the arrow that flieth by night, and the pestilence that destroyeth at noon-day!' When he feels the earth shaking under him, and hears the volcano roaring near him, and the thunder tearing the oaks and rocks about him! Here, 'though he walk through the valley and shadow of death, he fears no evil,' for he knows that God is with him. 'His heart standing fast, trusting in the Lord.' Almighty goodness forbids

it to palpitate; or if it does, an heroic mixture of love and joy gives it more than half its agitations. The hand of God is not always visible in our deliverances, seldom indeed to the unthinking; but he that knows his own weakness, and how little it is that he can do to deliver himself on a thousand perilous occasions, will often, by the eye of faith, perceive that hand, which conceals itself from the fleshly organ, that gratitude may search for, and find its benefactor. How is God, 'who giveth and upbraideth not' by an ostentation of his goodness, pleased with this search! And how is the poor soul transported, when he hath found that God himself was at his side in the critical hour of danger, when all human, all created help, would have been useless? Nay, perhaps, when the poor soul was arrested in its eager pursuit of criminal pleasure, quickly to be avenged with infamy and destruction? This last sort of deliverance, though not always welcome, because it comes against the grain of a man's appetite, is surely the best and highest of all deliverances. When a man becomes a devil to himself, to be delivered from this worst of fiends by the persevering goodness of an angry God, exceeds every thing that even angelic understanding, or the highest rapture of gratitude can conceive. Every thing in the natural world goes on, as it were, in a regular machine. But the moral, consisting of angels and men, requires to be directed and governed. All creatures, free to do good, or evil, must be inspected and governed. They may do good, and be rewarded; they may do evil, and be punished. A master therefore they have to superintend their conduct, and to distribute to them according to their deeds. In this system the relative attributes of God, his justice and mercy, find an open course of exertion, wherein his Providence is ever concerned. And correction, restraint, relief, are always wanted, and always applied. The moral world is as well worth guiding as creating; and being fallible, if not guided it may go astray. And how it can, when once astray, be rectified, but by superior wisdom and goodness, is not conceivable. Redemption therefore and sanctification become necessary effects of infinite goodness, as long as moral freedom gives an open to transgression, and to a return from thence to obedience. As misery is connected with the former, and happiness with the latter, the call on mercy for grace and help must ever be made by the creature on its Maker, who will as assuredly hear and interpose, as we shall pray. Here is sufficient encouragement to depend on a particular Providence,

provided an humble sense of our weakness, a deep sorrow for our sins, and a faithful reliance on divine goodness, shall give the requisite force to our supplications. But what if these qualifying dispositions are unattainable by our best endeavours without aid from the same Providence? If this is the miserable case of man in his now fallen condition, as indeed it is, a particular Providence becomes as necessary to him in this first step towards his relief, as in any of the subsequent. Ere he goes for help, he must be enabled to go. Ere he can be humble, he must be humbled. Ere he can repent of his sins, he must feel the sting of sin and death. Ere he can stand fast in the faith, he must be enabled to stand; he must believe, that 'God is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,' and his providential assistance. What is man without God in the world? A poor forlorn creature, far less able to keep his place in it than the beast that perisheth; than the fly, that flutters about his nose; than the worm, that grovels in the dunghill. To be wise, he must derive from the fountain of wisdom. To be strong, he must draw from the source of strength. To be good and happy, he must have recourse to God, from whom alone there is a possibility of this attainment. But then the provident God is ever present with him; 'Christ, the way, the truth, and the life,' offers him that hand, which was nailed to the cross for him; and the Holy Spirit gives strength to walk in that way, kindles up that truth, and that light before him, and breathes in his soul that principle of eternal life whereby he is converted into a new and happy creature. Of all the instances of Providence, that of revelation, from first to last, whether we consider it as general or particular, is the most necessary, the most gracious, and the most manifest to the understanding of men. True light for a benighted world, and holy love for the wandering affections of our hearts, are here displayed, and enforced to the total reformation and eternal happiness of all who will receive them.

165. It is one character of an honest man, that he walks upright, and in so doing, it may be his too, that he is a prudent man, and sees the way before him, so that it is easy for him to go forward to his purpose on a straight and visible line of life. The cunning man, another name for a mixture of knave and fool, crouches, dodges observation, and moves always on a curve. His neighbours, if somewhat acquainted with him, have no defence against him but suspicion, for they can seldom guess where

he is going, or what he is about. He doubles on the scent of their suspicions, like a hare and fox in one, now turning to the right, and then to the left; and, if possible, always in the night. An honest man is the worst huntsman for this sort of beast; 'but for such as thus turn aside to their crooked ways,' the Psalmist says, 'the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.' He sees their ways, and shall lead them forth from coverture, with the more open workers of iniquity, robbers, murderers, &c. to a shameful exposure, and to such punishments as shall force them to wish they had been only fools. Happy is folly, when she can get leave to walk alone. There is somewhat like safety in her simplicity, till she comes under the guidance of cunning, which always takes up with her, when she can find her; but, in the end, is betrayed, and even outwitted, by the silly companion.

166. It is natural, I believe, for old men, no longer able to act, to become advisers and projectors, as unwilling to be wholly useless. I ask not to stand in a better light with my countrymen; nay, I leave them to ascribe my project, briefly delivered in these papers, for the improvement of physic, to vanity, rather than benevolence, as I do the following, for a purpose much more easily attainable, and of superior utility. According to the present unhappy mode of life, a gentleman of considerable fortune, generally passes more than one half of his time in the capital, a slave to vanity, luxury, and fashion, to which not a few adopt the vices of drinking and gaming. These produce debts and distress in the midst of splendour; and hence again the oppression of a poor working tenantry on their estates. Were I not afraid that wisdom might excite a degree of distaste, I would say, that I am going to point out a much wiser and happier scheme of life to these gentlemen, and that easily producible in their own minds, and on their own estates, without going to the Indies for its materials. If a gentleman of fortune, suppose from five hundred pounds to five thousand pounds a year, would make it a rule to live two-thirds of his time at his country-seat, he would breathe wholesome air, enjoy the benefit of healthful exercise; and living close to nature, would, in vigour and cheerfulness, give himself the best chance to protract life to a good old age, so as to see his well-educated children comfortably settled in the world; well-educated, I say, because brought up at a distance from the sink of vanity, fashion, and every vice. His power of providing reasonable fortunes for them might, in this situation, be most com-

modiously consulted. Besides, reasonable portions would to them be greater, than five times as much to young people, otherwise habituated. Here it is, that a gentleman, made consequential by his fortune, on a grand-jury, and by a commission of the peace, might suppress all those hideous vices, drunkenness, quarrelling, murdering, pilfering, cheating, to which the lower classes of mankind are so shockingly addicted. And here it is, that by his countenance and example, he might encourage the religious, the sober, the industrious, in such a manner, as to reduce the neighbourhood round him, to a great distance, into a happy degree of regularity and civilization. His own tenants would reap the benefits of this improvement more early and amply than others less under his influence; from whence plenty and contentment among them, and rents better paid to him, perhaps larger too in time, would naturally result. But to aid this secondary view, my system goes a little farther. If this worthy gentleman, from cultivating mankind, would set himself to improve the soil too of his estate, which he might still more easily effect, a new and beautiful world would soon spread itself round him. My project for this is obvious. Let him set apart three or four acres in his demesne of the most different kinds of soil, especially the worst, for experiments. His own ingenuity, aided by a few well chosen books of husbandry, may be most agreeably employed on, here and there, a square perch of ground, in mixing soils of the most different kinds; trying new, and cheap kinds of manure, or compost; with proper ploughs working the sides of steep hills into spiral ridges; and adapting all sorts of seeds, though somewhat at random, to his several little spots, prepared by new or old, but rather new modes of culture, he may, in the summer and autumn months, be able to judge how his experiments have succeeded, provided he hath taken care to fix a short stake in every little patch of ground, with a number, corresponding to his book, wherein, at the same number, an entry hath been specifically made of all the particulars in his culture of that patch, and of the seed assigned to it. A trifling expense will pay for these trials, and afford him infinite entertainment. Now supposing but one out of four of his experiments should succeed to his wish, that one exhibited to two or three farmers, occupying a considerable quantity of ground, nearly the same with that in its natural state whereon the experiment hath been made, and the mode of culture in the book referred to, so much useful ground is gained, as it were off the sea, and added

to the face of the earth. The understanding of the mere farmer is so bounded; and then the daily necessity of providing for a family, and making up his rent, &c. is such, that he hath no leisure to think of experiments, nor can afford the expense. It is the gentleman, therefore, alone, who can project improvements in agriculture, and carry them into somewhat like execution. Here, or no where, improvements in this most necessary and delightful art must originate. Let no man say, it is impossible to go much farther than hath been already gone. Other nations are already far before us in it; and they themselves probably as far behind a consummate knowledge in the various powers of soils, and natural manures, and methods of culture. It may also be a pleasing amusement, always in the way of a country gentleman, to superintend the introduction or improvement of useful manufactures in his neighbourhood, to an immense advantage of the poorer sort of people, at present unemployed, and starving. A trifling sum lent to a family of this denomination, might often raise it from indigence to the comforts of life, if the loan were judiciously applied, and repayment regularly exacted. To these, and the like methods, should the gentleman I am speaking of, add a constant attendance on the house and table of God, he would soon exhibit to the word a good and happy people. On the whole, I know not so noble a character as that of a gentleman thus situated and employed. No man would so well deserve to be sent to parliament as this real father to his country; and there he would find the way to unite into one two things, separately pretended to, loyalty and patriotism. He would teach the nation to strengthen the hands of its king, and to manage its revenues with honest economy. What he had done in miniature on his estate, he would at least labour to do throughout the extent of his country. His wisdom and goodness, already so exemplified in the narrow sphere he had to care for, might give him a majority in parliament, and call his great soul from the plough to dictate to a nation. Providence ought to be trusted for more than this. From the cultivation of a little garden, Abdalonimus was called to the crown of the Sidonians, and proved a wise and good king. David was nothing the worse king for having been formerly a shepherd.

167. Whether the idea of politeness, as it is commonly conceived, includes any thing more than mere exteriors, is to me a little doubtful. It were to be wished, however, that somewhat

more essential than a genteel address, an air of dignity, a civil sort of condescension, that sinks those to whom it is shewn, into an insignificance, below that which even contempt could reduce them to; if somewhat better I mean than can be derived from a dancing-master, a taylor, a fine house and coach, or a continual intercourse with the beau-monde, were included in an idea, so much venerated by many, and so awkwardly affected by a still greater number. I shall be better understood by taking the liberty of asserting, that Christ and his apostles afford, by far, the best instructions and precedents of true politeness. Pride, though the basis of almost all that passes for it, is its very reverse. True politeness can be built on nothing but humility, and a preference of others to ourselves. Of this it was impossible for any other man, indeed for any other being, to set so striking an example as Christ hath done. His precepts repeatedly inculcate this virtue; and his immediate followers press both upon us, as those fundamental requisites, without which it is in vain to think of being Christians; and, certainly, as much in vain to think of being truly polite. A universal charity or kindness to all men, carried as far as possible towards our enemies, exemplified by our blessed Saviour in its highest perfection, is by himself made the distinguishing badge of all his disciples, and worn accordingly by the first Christians in every thing they did, wrote, or suffered. Now, what are civilities in soft words, bows, or smiles, without kindness, but empty compliments, or base dissimulation? Is it possible that politeness should consist in these? If it is, the behaviour of a Christian clown is infinitely more honourable. The wisdom or spirit of a Christian 'is peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.' What lovely ingredients of true politeness! The Christian is peaceable, he therefore neither quarrels, nor fights duels. He is gentle, and therefore never treats others with any degree of brutality. He is easy to be entreated, and not like Nabal, 'such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him.' Nay, he is full of mercy to his enemy, when in his power; full of good fruits, lending, giving, helping, as often as his neighbour stands in need, and he is able to impart assistance. He is without partiality and self-preference, as often as his fellow-creature akin to him only by nature, and in Christ Jesus, stands in need of what the good Christian never wastes on pride or luxury. He is without hypocrisy, for sensible that good words can neither

clothe the naked, nor feed the hungry, he says little, and gives largely. There is, indeed, a glorious sort of hypocrisy in his right hand, which will not suffer 'his left hand to know what it does.' So far is he from 'giving to be seen of men, that, if he can, he will not suffer the person relieved to know his benefactor, lest indigence should foolishly blush for itself. The gospel spreads out a much larger canvass for this picture; but the miniature, here given, fully proves what I ventured to assert, that Christ, and the Holy Ghost, are the best teachers of true politeness. They rub off all asperities, and polish the inside, as well as the outside, of the vessel. On surfaces, so exquisitely wrought off, no filth can adhere; and let me add, that blind as mankind may be, the brilliancy of a vessel, thus finished by him who made the world, will shine to a great distance both of place and duration. The man, who sits to me for this portrait, is taken from the plough of Camillus, and the sheep-fold of David. He cannot make a genteel bow; but his whole life is one bow of humility, both to God and man. He knows not what to do with his legs, but to go about his business; nor with his arms and hands, but to earn honest bread for his family, and to hold out some meal and potatoes to one poorer than himself. His politeness is all intrinsic; but if it is united in the same man, as it sometimes is, with the exterior accomplishments of good breeding, human nature plumes itself in the borrowed honours of Christianity, and lives above itself, the life of superior beings.

168. Next to the institutions of Christ himself, and of the Holy Spirit, those of his church, especially the primitive church, ought to be venerated as highly useful by all Christians. Of these latter, a constant attendance on the Lord's table, sureties in baptism, and days set apart for commemorating the apostles and some of the martyrs, claim the first esteem. These last are undoubtedly the highest characters in history, and their glorious examples come so home to us, and point so directly at the heroism of our religion, that nothing, but that of Christ himself, the great and primary martyr, who 'before Pilate witnessed a good confession,' can equally animate us to a contempt of this world, and of life itself. If the memory of Ridley, and some other martyrs of our church, were celebrated in this manner, it would tend, no doubt, very happily to this noble purpose. As an Irishman, I have often lamented it, that the Protestants here do not keep St. Patrick's Day, as well as the

Romanists. This excellent man brought Christ home to this remote island, and with him the knowledge of letters, as well as an introduction to some degree of civilization. The legendary fables that have been tacked to his name, should not prevent our veneration. He came to cure the natives of idolatry, and superstition; and so far succeeded, that had they not, in after-times, departed from his instructions, into new modes of both, they might have been to this day among the best and happiest people in the world; for certain it is, there is no race of mankind better disposed by nature to be good Christians. Among all the ecclesiastical appointments ever thought of, that of Good Friday is founded on the strongest reason, sets before us a train of the most useful and affecting thoughts, carries up the understanding to the greatest transaction ever exhibited throughout the universe, and inspires the heart with sentiments of gratitude and love, more sublime, than, for aught we know, can be felt by angels themselves. The eternal Son of God, to save us from endless misery, and entitle us to endless glory, dies on a cross, to which he was nailed by our own hands. After saying this, would there not be a sort of presumption in attempting to proceed any farther on the ineffable subject? No words, no feelings, can do justice to it. If there is no sorrow like our sorrow, no gratitude like our gratitude, for this death, no more will be expected of us by our infinite Benefactor. But we have still a heart of stone, yea, harder than stone (for the rocks rent at his death), if our grief and gratitude bear no proportion to this death. Is there any thing that can steel them against either? Yes, sin, and sin alone. What! sin! which Christ died to atone! Is it possible, that this enemy of him and our souls, can be still set above him in the human heart? If this is the case, no atonement hath been made for us, and Almighty goodness itself cannot save us. We can never become objects of mercy to his Father, until humility, contritious sorrow, and horror at ourselves, have burst the chains of sin, and forced our hearts open to gratitude and love. Until, as Christ hath passed through the shadow of death for sin, we also pass through the shadow of a death unto sin, we can never emerge into the elevated region of that gratitude, or that love. The sun itself put on mourning at the death of Him that made it; and in what blackness of darkness ought the sinful soul to sit at the death of Him who died to save it? How ought this soul to hasten, through the gloom of repentance, into the light of God's countenance,

who offers to it mercy and pardon for the sake of its dying Saviour? Faith alone can bring us to this; and the Spirit of God alone can work in us that faith. Let us, therefore, do our best by meditation, prayer, and vigilance, that God, seeing our earnes endeavours, and pitying our weakness, may do the rest. Had Christ said, If you love yourselves, keep my commandments, self-interest would have easily understood the great propriety and force of this language, as being the language of men. But, to raise us to motives of action more noble, he saith, 'If you love me, keep my commandments;' that is, if you have any gratitude in you, fly from eternal misery, and come to me, my Father, and heaven. This language of God and heaven seems somewhat odd, and hardly intelligible to the sons of earth, who have neither conceptions, nor words, into which they may translate it. Had not Christ loved us more than his own life, he had never died for us; and, if we love him not more than our own lives, we are unworthy of him. What are our lives, compared with his? If a man 'shall lose his life for Christ, he shall find it,' shall find his wretched temporal converted into an endless life of happiness and glory. This fruit of our gratitude is pulled from the very tree of life, that is, from the cross of Christ.

169. In An Appeal to Common Sense, lately published, I endeavoured, plainly and briefly, as addressing myself to the unlearned, to vindicate the purity of the holy Scriptures, so far as they are or may be intelligible to the lower capacities of mankind, in our translations. But an attack hath been made, and urged, with no small confidence, on the very originals, by Arians, Socinians, Deists, and infidels of every denomination, whether open or covert, as if revelation were too much corrupted in the very fountain, to be drank in the streams. They pretend that these writings have been miserably interpolated by the hands through which they have come down to us, to serve the purposes of sects and parties, more especially of that which calls itself orthodox. This they do with an assurance little short of that which men may shew, who have recovered the writings of Moses, and all from him to St. John inclusive, in their own hands. If we call upon them to produce a list of particular interpolations, they have recourse, and that only in general, to the collections of various readings gathered out of ancient manuscripts, by ourselves, such as by Lucas Brugensis, Walton, Mills, &c. in order, by collation, to come at the original and genuine text, a method used with admirable success,

and scarcely avoidable, in the recovery of all other ancient writings. Of these varieties, thus scrupulously noted, there is hardly one in a thousand of any consequence to the sense of a single passage, no more than the various readings of our printed Bibles, of Homer, or Livy, would be, were they drawn together in the same manner, although they would compose a catalogue, ten thousand times longer. If a man cannot make sense of a particular passage in his Horace, erroneously printed, is it not a satisfaction to him to find that passage in another copy so printed as to do justice to that most accurate writer, and to his critical readers? It is worth observing, as hath been already done by the very ingenious Mr. White, that this clamour about interpolations is the expiring cry of heresy and infidelity. Let me add, that our covert infidels, having tried all their arts of forced interpretation, and found the word of God too refractory for their cunning, are now determined, as their last shift, to fling away their mask and the Bible together. They are more honest than their predecessors in infidelity. They perceive the Bible cannot be wrested to their opinions; and, therefore, there is nothing left for them, but to try if they can explode it. If, however, this sacred volume is once thrown aside, what will become of all that the Arians and Socinians have written? As to what the orthodox have written against them, the loss of that will not be lamented; and good reason, for they too have run into metaphysical refinements and fooleries, which the simplicity of revelation almost equally abhors. But, certain it is, that the book of God will continue to furnish plain and wholesome food for the rational soul, when all the French cooks of opinion shall be extinct, both they and their fires. But let us return to the subject of interpolation itself, and let us ask, when it was, that the Scriptures were so corrupted! It could not be in the dark ages of monkery, when the spirit of controversy was fast asleep; when the world thought all in one track, or thought not at all. Besides, we have manuscripts of the Scriptures, a thousand, and more than a thousand years old, which carry us back a good many centuries anterior to that era of ignorance. And it is from these very manuscripts, that all the Bibles in present use have, after most accurate collations, been published. Well, but might not the Bible have been corrupted by the orthodox, the Monothelites, the Eutychians, the Nestorians, the Macedonians, the Sabellians, the Photinians, the Marcionites, the Arians, the Manichæans, the Gnostics, the Ebi-

onites, the Cerinthians, the Donatists, the Novatians, or the Orthodox, as they were called, &c? Were there not enough of these paddlers in the stream to raise up mud? Yes, in the stream, but not in the fountain. These very men, Providence for wise purposes permitting them, were too bitterly engaged against one another, and still more bitterly against the orthodox, to suffer the expunction of an old text, the insertion of a new one, or a material corruption of any one which concerned the controversies agitated, to creep in or out of the Scriptures, to which all sides had their sole and continual recourse for arguments and decisions. How could a passage be changed, all at once, in all or most of the copies, as well in the hands of the opponents as defendents? How changed in the memories of all the controvertists, or in the greater number of the translations? Again, how could wilful omissions, substitutions, or mutilations of passages, so sure to be detected, have served the cause it was employed in? A cause too, not worth serving, if in any degree indefensible, without a fraud so impious. To stare out of all countenance these talkers about interpolations, we have all the passages fairly standing out in the sacred text, as quoted of old by the orthodox, and by all the sects and heresies, recorded in the genuine works of Athanasius, Hilary, Basil, Nazianzen, Jerome, Augustin, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Œcumenius, Theophilact, but more especially of Vigelius Tridentinus. The texts to be found in these, and a crowd of others, and found also in their proper places of Scripture, shew to demonstration that those Scriptures were then the same they are at this day; and yet these are the very passages of Scripture with which the ancient disputants were most tempted to make free. As to passages of a more moral nature, they stand out so thick in the writings of the fathers still extant, and so exactly the same with those in our present copies of the Bible, that no room for doubt is left concerning them. The Syriac, the Arabic, the Vulgate translations, all vouch the sameness of Scripture from the closing of its canon to this day. So much of the old Italic translation as is extant bears the same testimony; and, though perhaps indirectly, supports the genuineness of 1 John v. 7, the most disputed text in all the Bible, which Tertullian and Cyprian appear to have quoted, and where else they found it, but in that version, is, now-a-days, very hard to say.

Had it been in the power of the Roman church, after it became papistical, it is hard to say what attempts she might have made in

the distress she felt to maintain her usurpations by two or three texts, but slightly seeming to favour them, and in the midst of many tenets adopted by her, directly contrary to those Scriptures, for which she pretends to be the only voucher, and yet, on account of which, she shuts up those Scriptures from all, but her licensed bigots. But Popery, properly so called, had not its birth till early in the seventh century, Gregory the First, deservedly styled the Great, having utterly disclaimed, and indeed refuted its fundamental pretension, in the latter end of the sixth, by his elaborate letter to John of Constantinople. It was then too late, as I have briefly, but abundantly shewn, to tamper with the Scriptures, so that nothing but an infallibility of interpretation could serve the turn; and those interpretations were to be swallowed as infallibly right, though self-evidently wrong. Among other objections to the word of God, this one of interpolation was set up along with oral tradition, as more to be depended on, and from that cry, all that is now thrown about by Arians, Socinians, and Deists, is poorly borrowed. The violent contentions about Easter, about the Filioque, but more especially episcopal supremacy, set the eastern and western churches in such a flame against each other, and that for more than a thousand years, that neither durst venture on interpolations of Scripture. While the author of evil, taking the advantage of human corruption, raised all the above-mentioned heresies and schisms, God permitted them, that his word might thereby be kept pure and unsophisticated. Besides, he had always in every age of his church, so many wise and faithful servants to detect and expose all attempts of the wicked to pervert his word, that nothing could be more impracticable than material changes therein, such as are now insinuated, but not particularly pointed out, much less possible to be proved. We have, at this day, Homer and Herodotus, books much older than the New Testament, in very good order; and why not the New Testament, for the preservation whereof in its genuine purity an infinite number of persons, good and bad, learned and unlearned, were deeply engaged at the risk of their parties, opinions, and souls? Had any other book so many watchers to guard it, text by text, and word by word, in every hour of its duration as this? I place bad and unlearned men in the class of watchers, as I do now the present talkers about interpolations, who would not fail, were a single text any where foisted in, or but one word added to point an old one against

their opinions, to raise an outcry louder than thunder, and deservedly, at the fraud. The church was never without a host of these; insomuch, that while we lament the mischiefs they wilfully did, we, at the same time, bless God for the good they unwittingly occasioned. Noxious vermin, if wholly useless, had not made a part of creation. Such as infest the human body enforce a cleanliness, necessary to a free insensible perspiration, a chief source of health. Had the church been always kept as clean as Christ left it, the similarity of this allusion here had been unintelligible.

170. Why of all masters is God the worst served? Because he is infinitely the best of all masters, and will have none but free servants: shocking answer! Are we bad, because he is good? Are we unfaithful and wicked, because he allows us to be free? If I return this answer, as well for myself as for others, my fellow-servants have the less right to take umbrage at it. We often omit what we ought to do, and do that which God forbids; and is there any other cause for this, but the patience and goodness of God, who does not instantly punish every act of disobedience? Or did he not leave us to the exercise of our liberty, to try what sentiments of gratitude towards him we feel in our heart; or had he compelled our services, we should be always obedient at least, and but obedient. Thus it is, that conscience forces me to answer. How it may work or sleep in others, I am not to judge. There is one that judgeth. Yet the behaviour of my neighbours forces me to fear they are too like myself. I have had, in succession, a variety of servants, one better, and another worse; but am sensible I never had one, who was not a better servant to me than I was to God, purely because he knew my pride and severity would not brook such failures in him, as I found in myself towards my God. Conscious of this comparison, I frequently bore the ill behaviour of a man, when I was just on the point of turning him away; and do not remember, save in one instance, that I dismissed any of them, but was always, by the rest, deserted for higher wages with somebody else, or for a master they liked better. In this, like Job, I did not despise the cause of my servant, when he contended with me; 'If I had, what then should I do, when God riseth up? When he visiteth, what then should I answer him?' At present, I have one of the best servants that ever man was blessed with; but feel inexpressible compunction and shame, when I compare his behaviour to me, with mine to God. It is true, I am a better master than a servant. But wretch

that I am! I was created, and purchased by the blood of Christ, to be a servant not a master. Even as a master, I am but a servant, and as such am to be tried, at the final account, by my purchaser. Thus I canvass myself. But when I look abroad at my fellow-clergymen, and my fellow-Christians, I see every where such a likeness to myself, such immense marks of delinquency, as force me to bode approaching ruin to both the church and kingdom, whereof I am a member, in reality an affectionate member. It stings me to the soul to think, that my sins help to raise the cry for judgments on both these objects of my love, the best of churches and countries, in every respect, but the service of God; and in this perhaps the worst, so far, I mean, as may be judged by the religious and political practice in general, which testifies an almost total disregard both to church and state. No set of people, I believe, ever thought more highly of their own understandings, nor were more exalted in the opinion of their own honour and greatness of soul, than we. Yet what proof of our wisdom do we give in the midst of an almost total indifference to the only possible means of our salvation? What proof of our magnanimity, in a total ingratitude to Providence for all the temporal blessings we enjoy, and all the spiritual, offered to us in the gospel and blood of our Redeemer? Do we, to shew our wisdom, postpone every worldly concern, in order to set forward the good required of us, and to redress the forbidden evil? Do we, to testify our gratitude, crowd the house and table of our infinite Benefactor? Do our clergy every where preach and act like men, who have set their hearts on a better world than this? Do our gentry keep within the bounds of humility, frugality, temperance, and chastity? Does the lower class of people, abhorring all profligacy of manners, aspire to those only attainable 'riches which no worms can corrupt, no thieves break through and steal?' If we all, a very few only excepted, take the contrary courses, where then is our wisdom? Where our dignity and generosity of soul? To be buried alive, that is, while the soul is still in the body, is most shocking. Yet far worse is his condition, whose soul serves for little else than to preserve his body from a stench, not at all so abominable as that which issues from its own spiritual putrefaction. Why should 'the dead bury their dead,' who don't stink half so ill as themselves? Servants! no, the slaves of sin can never be the servants of God. No professions can blind the eye of our Master. To please him, we must renounce ourselves, and recoil

at the service of his enemy. Herein is true wisdom. Herein is greatness and dignity of soul. The self-pleaser, the devil-pleaser, is a most stupid, abject, and contemptible soul; a soul, excommunicated by common sense, and reprobated by infinite wisdom. Who is so great a fool, as not to wish for a better guide than himself? Or who does not believe, that the guidance of his divine Master is absolutely infallible? Or who will reject the offer of this, and trust himself to his own, in the pursuit of happiness, on a road he knows little or nothing of? Did the Master of the universe claim our service purely for his own sake, we could not dispute the right of a Creator and Redeemer in so doing. But his claim is the demand of pity; and we may freely embrace, or reject it. How gracious is the claim! How infatuated the rejection!

171. We are told, that 'know thyself' was written in capital letters over the gate of Apollo's temple at Delphos. Wise as the words are in themselves, they were foolishly placed in that situation, for surely no man, who had the sense to know himself, would have gone in to worship, as a god, a thing far inferior to himself, made by some other man out of a block of wood or stone; or to inquire about futurity of a woman, half distracted by the noxious fumes of a cavern, on the mouth of which she sat, and from whence she belched out the windy injections of her scurvy god in bad verses, and fanatic equivocations, for which they were amply paid by the superstition of their stupid votaries. But had they been only middling guessers, not to say prophets, they ought to have been aware of the golden harvest which the needy and knavish Ætolians were to reap among their tripods and vases. But I should think, there were no small propriety in writing the words, 'Know thyself,' on the front of a church-porch, and 'Know thy God,' over the inner door. Take my inducements for so thinking. There is more reason that wisdom should begin at home than charity; and that which consists in the knowledge of one's self is by no means the easiest of acquisitions. An object may be too near to be seen; and the last thing we see is a defect or fault in ourselves. At the same time our understandings and virtues, if we have any, appear to us through magnifying optics. Were it not for these two hinderances, we should soon perceive how little beauty there is in our persons, how weak, how liable to accidents and distempers are our bodies; but especially we should quickly be made sensible, that our minds are still more exposed

to errors; that we know little or nothing, but as we are taught; and that we have a thousand biasses to the worst sort of instructions, particularly as to matters of religion, wherein we are infinitely more concerned, than in all other branches of knowledge. It is impossible for us to know any thing of God, but by analogy to ourselves, who are formed in his image, and by divine revelation. But as this image is miserably distorted and mutilated, that distortion is too apt to impart itself to our conceptions of revelation. Hence are generated an infinity of heresies and schisms; and hence again infidelity, with all its brood of vices. The first step to a deliverance out of this wilderness is to be made by a knowledge of ourselves, and that humility in a due sense of our wants, which lays the sole possible basis in us of true religion. Before we can come to God for either direction or help, we must be sensible we want both, and that he alone is able and willing to furnish them. Having by self-examination learned this humility in the porch, we may then enter the house of God, where we shall be taught to know ourselves still more perfectly, and become fit disciples for that Master, who holds forth the 'wisdom, which is from above.' The inquiry into ourselves will not be difficult, if it is not distracted by vain philosophy, for instance, how our souls and bodies are united; how they act and re-act on each other, what rolls the eye, or bends the finger; whether moral freedom is seated in the understanding or the will; and how the divine assistances operate on either; matters far too high for human comprehension. If vanity and presumption are laid aside, such researches will vanish with them, and we may then easily find, that we are in ourselves ignorant, weak, and lost creatures, if he that made us does not take us into his gracious guidance and protection. Man, in his best state, was made to be guided and governed by his Maker; but, now that his very nature is corrupted, to imagine that he can sufficiently guide and govern himself, is the worst effect of that corruption, and the most desperate thought that can possibly enter into his degenerate soul. It renders him utterly incapable of knowing himself, and, if possible, still more incapable of knowing God. God alone can teach us the knowledge of himself. But God will not make himself known to the self-sufficient, nor will the self-sufficient condescend to be taught by him. This double, this mutual repugnance, places an eternal bar against all communication between the source of light, and the benighted soul; an eternal bar against the happiness of a soul, thus self-

sequestered from the fountain of all good. The man who addresses his king for a favour, knowing himself to be but a subject, approaches with humility, and is graciously received. The poor Christian, knowing himself to be an unworthy creature, approaches the King of kings with fear and trembling, and his prayers are granted, if fit for God to grant, and him to receive. But the self-sufficient hath nothing to ask or fear at the hands of God. His confidence is in his own understanding and power; and he therefore scoffs at churches, sacraments, and prayers, wherein we lower creatures repose some trust. This man saith 'to God, depart from me; for I desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that I should serve him? And what profit should I have, if I should pray unto him?' From the height, to which his imagination hath raised him, he looks down on us with contempt; and we on him with pity from that to which our humility, we hope, entitles us on the strength of his declaration, who is the greatest and humblest of all beings, namely, 'he that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'

172. It hath, I think, been asserted by some writer of eminence, that we derive from our ignorance a large share of those comforts and pleasures which we enjoy in this world. Sure I am, that since the days of Eve, the mother of philosophy, 'he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow;' and yet, in many instances, the sorrows of knowledge are preferable to the pleasures of ignorance. During the last war, a gentlewoman in a stage-coach having expressed to a young officer the most anxious fears about her son, whom she expected from Gibraltar, was comfortably freed from all her apprehensions by an assurance from the officer, that there had been lately made an excellent bridge from Gibraltar to Ireland, and that he himself had just arrived on furlough upon that very bridge, having but touched at that garrison in his way from Port Mahon.

173. A real Christian will never, as such can never, swear to do that which is sinful and unlawful in itself. A real Christian having, whether to save his life, or otherwise, sworn to do that which is lawful for him to do, will keep his oath inviolate, though it were to his own hinderance or loss. To this latter maxim it is objected, that a compulsory oath is not obligatory, as for instance, in the case of an oath taken to save the swearer's life; that, if such oaths were universally deemed obligatory, they would put

the honest part of mankind, and their property, into the hands of robbers and cut-throats, with impunity, for the most part, to the latter; and that the oath of God must, by that means, be prostituted into a tool in the hands of the devil and his servants, to oppress the servants of God. To these objections a full and satisfactory answer is here given. In the first place, there neither is, nor can be, any such thing as a compulsory oath, because, if the man to whom the oath is tendered may take or refuse it as he pleases, he is not compelled to take it; even if he must take it, or die; there is a choice given him, and he is not, nay cannot be, forced. This was the case with all the ancient martyrs, who had a choice, and chose to die, rather than offer incense to an idol. Every man must die some time or other, and it is certain, no man can die better, than as a martyr to God and his conscience; this however is said, in case the matter of the oath is unlawful. But when the oath tendered is only for the surrender of a man's worldly substance, or some part of it, such surrender is lawful, and the man may save his life, if he pleases, by that surrender. If however the robber should threaten him with immediate death if he does not swear to conceal the fact, here again he hath a choice, to swear or die, and is not compelled to either; and is only to consider whether the concealment is lawful, or not, and to die, if it is not in his judgment, for he 'must not do evil, that good may come of it.' And by the same maxim of the Holy Spirit, he is not to swear, and violate his oath, to save the honest part of mankind from the hands of robbers. He should leave them to the protection of Providence, and not impiously suppose, that they cannot be otherwise defended, but by the violation of his conscience. Codrus might die for his country; but who would be damned for it? It is farther to be considered, that if the oath of secrecy in this case is generally to pass for nothing, the robbers will provide for secrecy and impunity another way, that is, by murdering all they rob. Hence it may appear, that the oath of secrecy, both taken and kept, will contribute more to the safety of honest men, than thousands of prosecutions. In answer to the last objection, that keeping the aforesaid oaths would prostitute them into tools in the hands of the devil, &c. it is granted, that good men would suffer in their property by it, but would save their lives. If honest and good men were not, by providential permission, exposed here below to thousands of other hardships and trials, we might with the more reason think it our duty to

provide against this, if to be done with a safe conscience. But is the conscience no way concerned in an oath? In solemnly calling on God to attest our truth and sincerity, when, to save our lives, we engage to give up our property, and to be silent as to an injury, which our religion obliges us to forgive, and to return with a benefit? It is to be feared, the devil may rejoice in the conversion of an instrument, lately pointed at our worldly goods, into a dagger, that pierces the very soul. If at the time we take the oath we mean to break it, which the objectors themselves apparently suppose, nothing can be more horribly impious. Although it was by craft and lies, that the Gibeonites obtained a covenant and oath of peace from Joshua and the Israelites, yet, that covenant was kept by the latter, for some hundreds of years, and not violated, but by Saul, whose family were punished for the infraction, and the Israelites afflicted, afterward, with three years' famine, for the part they took with him in the breach of their oath, considered as the descendants of those that had sworn. But acting according to my arguments is, it may be said, compounding a felony, and exposing a man to the penalty of the law. It may be so. I am not a lawyer, but only a clergyman, whose duty it is to prefer the laws of God to those of men. If the good Christian is sued and amerced, he will let the fine go with that which the robber carried off, and be content that his life and conscience are still left him. But how he can be sued if he holds his tongue, I cannot see, as the robber will not appear against him in a hempen cravat. The law against compounding felonies is certainly a wise and excellent law; but if in this case it clashes with the law of God, as I hope it does not, I cannot allow it to be pleadable in *foro conscientiæ*. The good man, of whom I have been speaking, swears, to save his life, which the laws of his country could not ensure to him, and keeps his oath, to save his soul. So far I may speak as a barrister in my own line, and must add, that all other barristers may as well hold their tongues, if the sacredness of oaths is not preserved inviolable.

174. A very sensible gentlewoman, having read the two first volumes of sermons I had the presumption to publish, asked me, If my own life and conversation were strictly conformable to the rules I had laid down in those discourses? Startled at the question, I answered, No; but that I did my best to act, as well as I wrote; and that I sometimes read over my own discourses, not that I thought them equal to those of other writers on the same

subjects, but to upbraid and excite myself, on the footing of her question, to a greater degree of watchfulness over my own ways. Two of them, I said, had been of singular use to me for this purpose, more than the most excellent performances of Barrow, Tillotson, or Stanhope, could have been, because they stared my own failings in the face, like an additional conscience, with greater sternness, than the better writings of other men could do. I confessed, there was no necessity for my publishing, or ever writing new sermons, had no new crops of heresies, infidelities, and vices sprung up, which ought to be weeded out; or had not my zeal, perhaps my vanity, persuaded me, that my particular manner might have been of some use in checking the pernicious growth. New attacks on religion and virtue seemed to call for new defences, especially as the older defences had been, in a too great degree, antiquated to the attention of an age, almost wholly given up to a taste for new things. The reproofs of Christ, uttered against those 'who say, and do not,' all along, flew in the face of my conscience, and induced me to do somewhat, though far short of what I ought to have done. I considered too, that men, not angels, have been chosen for the ministry of God's word; that the apostles confess themselves to be of 'like infirmities with other men;' and that they, and we all, 'have our gifts in earthen vessels;' that we are not at liberty to speak, or write, down to the standard of human opinions or vices, as if they were, in any degree, to be tolerated; but making the word of God our guide, to inculcate the most perfect rules of thinking and acting, knowing the infinite danger of qualifying and relaxing the rules of God to a people, so prone to content themselves with loose principles, and unwarrantable latitudes in action. All that have gone before me, have written with as much strictness as I, or have been false to the trust reposed in them. In regard to your question, madam, they should have written with a precision equal to mine, or not written at all. But, as to the conformity of their lives and mine with our writings, we all stand in great, I will not say equal, need of infinite mercy in our Master and Judge. Whatever the laws of men may be, those of God are perfect; but in neither are we ever told, what salvos, qualifications, or subterfuges, may be allowed us; nor how much of any law we may transgress with impunity. The same is to be said, and with equal reason and truth, of sermons, which are, or should be, nothing else but commentaries on the law, or gospel, of God. The clergyman in the

pulpit ought to be a good Christian, and the lawyer at the bar an honest man; but the failures of both, if duly repented of, and amended, will be forgiven, although in both cases, mercy will be put more on the stretch for pardon, than by the sins of other men, because, 'to whom much is given, of him will be much required,' and 'the servant that best knows his duty, and doth it not, is to be beaten with many stripes.' Though I most firmly believe Barrow, Tillotson, and Stanhope, were much better men than me, I should not be a whit comforted, to know they were not. They and I had the same perfect rule to preach and live by, and I hope it will not be among their sins or mine, that we dealt falsely between God and his people, by cooking his word to the vitiated palates of our hearers, than which I know no greater crime; by no means common murder, for this would be to murder souls. When my wise and good father, within a few hours of his death, was giving a charge to his ten children, he ordered me, who had then been but half a year at the Latin school, to study physic, and learn to cure the disorder that was killing my father. As I grew up towards manhood, I was possessed with a strong desire to go into holy orders, to which I was prompted by a very warm and persevering zeal to discharge, with more than ordinary diligence and fidelity, the duties of that sacred function. Considering this as a call from God, I obeyed, I fear, with a small mixture of vanity. Be that as it might have been, as soon as I had by study, qualified myself for the service of a country parish, wherein I was singularly active, I set myself to the study of physic, pursuant to the dying command of my father, that I might relieve the poor of my flock from their disorders, and the more dangerous and expensive practice of ignorant quacks, reflecting, at the same time, that as my great Master had miraculously healed both the mental and corporeal disorders of mankind, so his ministers ought to aim at the natural relief of his people in both respects. For this latter purpose, I gave an application of four years to the best authors, and to the conversations of the most able physicians I had access to. One of these gave me a piece of advice, from which I never departed. I, said he, when I am employed, must prescribe somewhat, were it but horse-dung, or brick-dust, for my fee; but as you mean to prescribe merely from a motive of charity, never prescribe but when you perfectly understand the disorder and its circumstances; nor recommend a medicine, the effect of which you are not as sure of. By following this rule you will

kill none; and if you kill none, and cure but one, you will be a great physician. By strictly adhering to this rule, and by the blessing of God, the lives of many were saved, and their health restored, under my care. Some good, I hope, was done by my instrumentality, in my clerical function. Yet, madam, such have been my sins, that I have often regretted my ever having been a clergyman. My sermons, and other more occasional documents, have frequently stuck in the throat of my conscience. Whatever I have been in other respects, I never accommodated my preachings to my own failings, but to the word of God alone. Now, madam, after all this talk, give me leave to ask you, Whether you always keep strictly up to those rules of life and economy, which you lay down to yourself, your family, and relations. She answered, Touch me not there, till I employ you as my father confessor; not but I could bear to confess to you, so far as the question goes, that my precepts are better than my practice, and that I labour to make my children and servants better people than I am myself. Ask no more of me now. I shudder at the return of my own question, and am afraid both you and I border a little on hypocrisy, for what is hypocrisy, but an endeavour to appear possessed of more piety and goodness, than we feel within? Your readers will hardly suppose you so warm in reality, as your discourses speak you to be. They will, here and there, think they perceive in your writings a great deal of artificial fire used to raise a cold cucumber, and a syllabub hard whipped into froth. If they do, madam, I cannot help it, whether the fault lies in their criticisms, or my performances, or in both. In no one sermon I ever preached, had I one lesson for myself, and another for my hearer. My heart and conscience made always a part of the audience; and the pure word of God, ever dictated to me, what I delivered to them. Whatsoever constitutional warmth was mixed with my zeal, and much there certainly was; and howsoever earnestly I threatened the terrors of the Lord to obstinate sinners, especially such as preach unsound doctrines to his people; I trembled when I did it, and pushed with a weapon, sharp at both ends, that pointed at my own sins, as well as theirs. I can sincerely declare, I write and speak on religious subjects in earnest. I never durst do otherwise. The utmost efforts of human genius, nay, of angelic eloquence, are, in my opinion, utterly inadequate to the infinite dignity, the infinite demand on wonder, on fear, on gratitude, in all points of faith and practice of our religion. Here

we cannot exceed; here we must fall short. Another reason, of nearly equal force with the former, for the utmost religious warmths in a clergyman, arise from the lamentable coldness, observable at present in all ranks of people, to both the principles and practice of Christianity. For this paralytic disorder, not cooling, or relaxing medicines, but bracers and stimulants, are called for; and if not at hand, death must ensue. Not a lulling, but a rousing sermon, should be applied to a dozing congregation. One in a lethargy (not your case I hope, madam), may fret at the blistering plaister, or actual cautery, that awakes him to pain, and may cry out for his former soporific emollients; but his physician must be either very ignorant, or unfaithful, if he yields to the wish of his unhappy patient. So much, madam, for my manner of preaching. Now, as to the hypocrisy whereof you seem to form some suspicion in me, and to avoid the offence that suspicion might excite in my mind, join yourself in the censure; I solemnly protest, there is nothing I abhor so much, as putting on a greater shew of religion, than one feels within, that some worldly, ambitious, or sinister, or even good purpose, may be thereby promoted. I never asked, or employed any one to ask, any of the ecclesiastical emoluments, I have successively enjoyed; have declared, they were a great deal more than I deserved; and confessed myself the vilest and most unworthy of all God's servants, and that publicly as well as privately. If my not publishing a full list of my secret sins, and wearing clothes to cover my nakedness, as well as to keep out the cold, make me a hypocrite, I am then a hypocrite; but so is every man living, and every woman, you, madam, among the rest of your sex, a great deal more so. If this is not absolutely the naked truth, a very little stripping would complete the exposure by shewing the despicable vanity which too deeply blotted the fairer part of my life and conversation. Your definition of hypocrisy, sir, I close with, as better than my own; and am rejoiced to find, that I have little or none of it in me. Having been your mother-confessor on this occasion, be assured, whenever I am disposed to be as open with any one living, you shall be my father-confessor.

175. There are few words which have degenerated farther from their original meaning, than the word competency. This term, at first, signified nearly the same with competition, or the pretensions of two or more, who stood candidates, or *competentes*, for some post of honour, power, or profit. In somewhat a like

sense it is still taken among the great ones, who, sensible that wealth gives precedency and titles, never think they have enough, till they can outshine their competitors in splendour; and if their funds are insufficient for this purpose, they attempt it by running in debt. But among the lower classes of mankind, it now simply signifies enough. A very sensible poor man, being asked, What he took to be a competency, satirically answered, 'I believe it is 'a little more than one has.' Who indeed thinks he hath enough? It is true, there are men who abound on twenty pounds a year; and others, who are reduced to indigence on as many thousands; yet both wish for more. Plain it is therefore, that neither hath enough. How few have enough, if another hath any thing! Let us suppose Pompey and Cæsar, when infants, the former with a rattle, and the latter with a pipe; little Pompey must have the pipe, and little Cæsar the rattle, or both will fall to crying. The adorers of nature would do well to consider this. When these two grew up to be men, little Pompey (still little) could not bear an equal, nor little Cæsar a superior. Nothing less than the whole world, perhaps hardly that, could furnish either with a competency. The world abounds with little Pompeys and Cæsars, struggling to be uppermost, though in a poor village, of but ten cottages; and wealth is all they have to rise on. It is a maxim, vouched by experience, that no sum can make a man rich; for, be it as great as you please, he is poor if he wants more, and who does not want more? One, habituated to the luxury, the pomp, and splendour of high life, must inevitably be poor, for his wants are innumerable, and infinitely above his fortune. Besides, he feels through every want, with a keenness to which he is a stranger, who can be satisfied with a pound of bread, and four ounces of butter. The latter can walk thirty miles a day, and whistle as he goes; the former cannot get to the next street without a gilded coach, and half a dozen lacquies to attend it; and grows miserable if, in his way, he sees another carriage a little higher gilded than his own. The stupid walker however would be glad to exchange conditions with him. With people of either sort it is impossible to define a competency, because it lies entirely in opinion, and that opinion so vague, and so ill founded, that the throw of a die, or a blast of wind, is far more stationary. In reality, there is no such thing to be found among the men of this world. To investigate this fugitive idea, we must have recourse to religion, where it is precisely defined. Our religion tells us, that 'having food

and raiment,' we have enough, and 'are therewith to be contented.' Dare not to grumble, ye great ones, at this, for howsoever inadequate it may be to your wishes, it is a great deal too much for the merits of such ungrateful abusers of all you possess above that scantling. If your pride and vices of a thousand kinds, do but grow out of the root of all evil; if the higher they rise, they do but the more expose you to storms and thunders; and if they do but aggravate your black account in the sight of God, you would do well to fling them from you among such as have neither food nor raiment. If you do this, it will divert you to see the scramble, and possibly pain you a little, to see some of them grasping at more than is made necessary in the definition, consecrated by the word of God. A lord, raised but from a moderate fortune, to twice the wealth of any man I ever was acquainted with, assured me, that riches were the heaviest curse that ever fell upon any man. Then, my lord, said I, you are greatly cursed. I am, replied he, but I will soon make my riches fly in such a manner as no man ever did. What a world of good will you then do, my lord! Good! said he, no, but mischief. I will not fling a shilling to any mortal but him I hate. What a phenomenon will your shower of gold be, among those of blood, stones, &c. when recorded in natural history. I wish to see it, though I will not catch up a single farthing's worth of your curses, having already more than enough by my little parish, which pays me 150*l.* a year, and makes me richer than your lordship, who owes a large sum on your last purchase. This reminds me of the Plutus of Aristophanes. The god of wealth, hearing in the infernal regions perpetual complaints, made by the descending shades, of the poverty they had suffered in the upper world, while others had wallowed in riches, was seized with an extraordinary fit of benignity for a sort of devil, and came up hither to enrich all mankind. No sooner had proclamation been made of his arrival and intention, than the whole species crowded about, and were within a little of tearing him, and one another, to pieces, every one eager to be first served, and not sure that his wealth would hold out for the enormous wishes of so many. However, having soon satisfied all, every one was grown vastly too rich to work, and consequently all were in immediate danger of being starved, for who, worth 100,000*l.* would plough, or do any thing. Here was competency with a vengeance, and not more acceptable, at first, to the receivers, than consonant, in the event, to the malignity of the giver.

176. An elderly barrister and young lady, happening to meet in a drawing-room, had time for the following conversation, before other company came in. *B.* You are in the fashion, madam, I see. *L.* I am; and why not? *B.* If it set you off to more advantage, I should think you in the right; but I am humbly of opinion, you would look a great deal handsomer, if dressed a little nearer to those attractions which nature hath given you. Why you should powder a fine head of hair into greyness, I cannot guess, unless it is that you may look more like your grandmother. *L.* Yet you yourself are powdered up to the fashion, as high as I am. Is it to look more like your grandfather, and to be thought learned in the law, in proportion to the whiteness of your head? *B.* I am growing old; and my attempt to look wiser than I am is as pardonable in me, as it is in you to endeavour to look handsomer than you are, especially as you are grossly mistaken in the opinion, that the present fashion helps you to do so. *L.* If the younger gentry of your sex thought in this matter as you do, it would be but reasonable that I should think with you too. But as neither they, nor I, have feed you, it is but reasonable that I should dress for your juniors. *B.* They are puppies, and you ought rather to dress for men of sense. *L.* That I doubt. What hath a woman, fond, now and then, of her own way, to do with a wise husband? *B.* Very little, I believe. That gauze net is put on to catch a man, and shews a man to be a much greater fool than any bird or fish. There is no satire upon the understanding of a man so severe as a gauze handkerchief. *L.* Except your's in the marriage settlement of my mother, on thirty skins of parchment, which supposed the parties who paid for it to be most egregious fools, and, to point the satire, to be slippery knaves too. *B.* Had I foreseen the issue of that business, I should not have been concerned in it. *L.* Me only you mean; but you ought much rather with shame to regret the unhappy issue of my mother's suit for her jointure, which depended on that settlement, whereof the judges and jury could make nothing after a long trial, fatal to the life of poor Tunbelly, one of the jurors, who contracted his fever by sitting up all night.

177. A great deal of theory and speculation hath been published on the subject of a universal deluge; some of which hath pretty well stood the test of philosophical criticism, and some sunk under it. There is no part of sacred history more frequently, nor indeed more speciously attacked by infidels, than the account given

us of this extraordinary transaction by Moses. They say, the ark was not large enough to hold the contents assigned it by that writer, together with their food for one hundred and fifty days. That the water, partly salt, and partly fresh, could not have furnished a proper element either for sea-fish, or those of lakes and rivers. And above all, they insist, there could not be found water enough to cover the whole globe fifteen cubits above the tops of the hills and mountains, or if there could, it was impossible to carry it off again. Before these objections are considered, it will be proper previously to observe, that this piece of history was not written for philosophers; and that the Mosaic account of the creation, the fall of man, and the universal deluge, are succinctly written, as making altogether an introduction to the history intended, beginning with Abraham, to the law, the prophets, and more especially to the redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ. So much premised, it would be absurd to look, in so short a detail, for a philosophical *rationale*, or any thing more than the plain truth of facts. In the first place, it hath been satisfactorily proved in the first volume folio of the Universal History, to which I refer, that the ark was large enough to hold all the several species, said to have been received into it, two and two, and of clean beasts, seven, that there might be some for sacrifices, and a quicker propagation of these, as animal food was to be licensed immediately after the deluge. As to food, many species of animals, and almost all the insect tribes, could subsist for a longer time without any. Beasts of prey live upon one bellyful for a long time; and the granivorous kinds, having no exercise, might be well enough kept alive by very moderate quantities of grain. We have instances of human beings, who have lived very well forty, fifty, and sixty days, without any food, solid or liquid; and all this without a miracle. The animal nature is capable of, and sometimes liable to, very extraordinary suspensions of digestion, without a total stoppage of circulation. We know that all sorts of flies and creeping things are well preserved in their eggs for four, five, or six months. Secondly, as to the subsistence of all sorts of fish in water, partly salt, partly fresh, it will be no great difficulty with him who knows there are several species of them, such as salmon, eels, &c. that live commodiously, one part of the year in the sea, and the other, in our lakes and rivers; and that other species, purely marine, seem insensible of any great inconvenience in mixed water at the mouths of great rivers. The sea is not every where

equally salt, nor the water of lakes and rivers, every where, perfectly fresh. It were however worth an experiment to try, how long a trout would live in sea water, or a mackrel in fresh. How long either could live in mixed water, is hardly worth the trying. Thirdly, whence the waters of the universal deluge were accumulated and whither discharged, is a matter of more difficulty to those who are not convinced of the fact. Moses says no more, as to the former, than that the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven opened; and, as to the latter, he only tells us, that the fountains of the great deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and that God made a wind to pass over the earth, whereby the waters were assuaged. Ere this account can be properly criticised, we must know a great deal more of the earth under us, and the heavens above us, than we do, or ever can do in this life. Here, as knowledge cannot be attained, there is an open, or rather a call, for a few rational suppositions, which might lead to a solution of the difficulties before us. It is agreed, that the diameter of the earth is near eight thousand miles. To believe it solid rock from the surface to the centre, would be, one might think, to suppose a waste of matter, at least, of matter so dense and compact. Let us then suppose, that the globe consists of a crust, five hundred miles in thickness, composed of earth, rock, bitumen, minerals, &c. and the space within, seven thousand miles in diameter, to contain air, fire, water, or a chaotic mixture of them all. In a crust of five hundred miles in depth, there is room for many caverns, one over another, of vast extent, and, possibly, of from five to twenty miles in height. That which is largest and uppermost, may be filled with water, with an outer crust above it, of from one to four miles, here and there, in thickness. We may likewise suppose other caverns lateral to, or lower than this, replete with fire and ignited air or water. The force of vapour or expanded water, is to that of rarified air in a gun, as four hundred to thirteen. In this case, the fire of a lower cavern, bursting up through the water of another above it, may produce enormous convulsions and explosions in and from the upper crust. Of these last, earthquakes and volcanos exhibit an experimental proof. So much for the earth. Now as to the heavens, wherewith we are still less acquainted, what quantities of water, and how far rarified, there may be above us, we are totally ignorant, and therefore, whatever our opinions may be, they cannot contradict the Mosaic account of forty days heavy rain. If water may be so expanded

as here noticed, there is no saying what quantities of it may be lodged above our atmosphere, as on a rock, nor by what causes there kept in a state of expansion, for some time, and at other times condensed. We cannot say how far, in the former case it may heighten, nor in the latter lessen, the transparency of the medium, wherein it is suspended. The disappearance of several fixed stars may make it probable, that bodies of a more opaque nature, than pure ether, may sometimes interpose between those luminaries and our eyes. Be this as it will, we know that the air, light and pellucid as it is, often bears up immense quantities of water; and can neither say, what is the height of our atmosphere, nor what there may be above it, to carry still more. Philosophy hath not, cannot reach to these things; and therefore ought to be silent, till much greater lights are afforded. Nothing can argue a greater degree of stupidity, not to say petulance and vanity, than talking with assurance of things we know not. But now taking the foregoing suppositions (and as such only I propose them, though some of them I can go near to prove) for granted, the theory of a universal deluge will, wonderful as it is, be far less unaccountable than that of the creation, which every infidel, not divested of common sense, readily admits, I mean as a fact perfectly well accounted for by infinite wisdom and power. Suppose then, that by a universal earthquake the outer crust of the earth had been so shattered, as to fall into the abyss of waters under it, this and the great rains must have raised the waters fifteen cubits above the antediluvian hills, which were it necessary, as it is not, I should insist were none of them near so high as our present mountains. Thus it is that the possibility of the deluge, as related by Moses, may be rationally ascertained. We have nothing farther to do, but, on the data assumed, to shew the possibility of the present earth's emergence from the abyss, and to get rid of the additional water which came from above. To effect this, let us have recourse to a second earthquake, whereby the earth, as we now see it, might have been pushed up to a considerably greater height than it stood at before the deluge, and that in a larger quantity of firm matter the bottom of the sea might have sunk a mile or two lower, and that of the grand abyss twice as much; so that the abyss below the crust, and the sea above it, swallowed up all their own waters, and all that had fallen during the forty days rain, leaving nothing for the wind to do, but to waft away the superficial moisture which lay on the

ground. To make this theory feasible, let us take it for granted, which we may safely do on repeated observations, that a great part of the earth, as we now find it, lay under the sea, before the deluge. The large beds of sea-shells, and other submarine bodies, found almost in all countries, not only in low grounds, but even in our mountains, shew to demonstration that the places where they are found were once under the sea, or at least under the wash of the sea, in some very extensive deluge. For the dry land thus gained considerable quantities of that character before the flood, are now sunk under the sea, insomuch, that the land animals, and the fishes, may have made a beneficial exchange, the respective sorts of fertility having been somewhat exhausted before the great revolution. (See Sherlock on Prophecies.) It may be requisite just to take notice here, that in many countries, particularly to the south of Mount Atlas, where they seldom have either springs or rivers, they find plenty of pure water, by digging down to what they call the sea under ground. Hence it may appear, that I have begged no question in asserting the existence of the abyss mentioned above. As to the subterraneous caverns and fires, with their prodigious effects, I am not a whit more obliged to supposition. To say any thing of the benefits we derive from these fires, would be to depart from my present subject; but as they are made an objection by atheistical people to religion, it will not be amiss to say a few words of them, by the by, in this place. These fires have a very considerable share, along with the sun, in causing the fertility of the earth, as is evident in countries near the volcanos, and often shook by earthquakes, such as Naples, Sicily, and Peru, where there is a greater produce of fine fruits than in any other parts of the world. Here the crust of the earth is thinner than elsewhere, and here therefore the subterraneous stove operates with more effect than elsewhere, though it is not without effect any where. Tempests save a thousand lives at land for one they destroy at sea. Much the same is true of thunder and volcanic eruptions. They purge the air, and supply it with sulphureous and inflammable principles, without which animal life, no more than vegetative, could not be well maintained. But to return, as the universal deluge was a particular dispensation to punish and put a stop to sin, it is not a little absurd to look for its causes in the mere natural course of things, especially as subjected to the futility of vain philosophy, too presuming on its own powers of accounting for every phenomenon,

to have recourse to divine interposition, even where the aberrations of free agents have made it necessary; which, notwithstanding, vanity affects to call cutting, instead of untying knots. But reason says, *Deus interfit, si dignus vindice nodus;* a good maxim in Pagan poetry, but a much better in the government of the moral world, to which the natural should be subservient. I confess therefore, that what I have here offered, as philosophical, is to be understood no otherwise than answering a fool according to his folly, with stuff perhaps as foolish as his own. Is the Maker of all things so confined to his own works, that he can do nothing out of the order of that nature, which he hath impressed on the operations of his own hands? If man hath gone aside from the nature which God hath given him, may not God go aside from it to find him? Vain babbler, what dost thou know? He that made the world, can he not destroy it? at least can he not alter it, but thou must say to him, 'What doest thou?' If intemperance and the gout hath not yet taken away the use of thy limbs, tell me how thou canst set one foot before another? If thy pride hath not totally ruined thy brains, tell me how it was that God created the world, how he made this globe, how he kindled up the fire, and how he poured out the water from the unfruitful fountain of nothing? If thou canst answer to none of these questions, how darest thou question his power to direct his own works, or to make and annihilate water? 'If he touch the mountains they shall smoke, if he look on the earth it shall tremble.' Art thou more insensible than they? And is it thy philosophy that hath stupified thee beyond the hardness of marble? If God, to make an example of an apostate world, or to redeem a penitent one, should not be allowed miraculously to interpose without thy permission, what would become of thee who cannot be saved without a miracle, as great perhaps as any in his work of creation? If his interposition cannot be known but by working miracles, the working none would be somewhat more, and worse than all other miracles; for would it not prove, that a God of infinite justice and power allows impunity to sin? and that a God of infinite mercy and power gives no encouragement to repentance and amendment? Nature itself is a miracle, or a congeries of infinite miracles. If this world, as it certainly was, hath been made for man, a morally free agent; and if man, through the abuse of his freedom, is at any time in danger of being miserable for ever, the working of miracles contrary to those of nature, for his correc-

tion and recovery, becomes highly probable on the footing of his Maker's attributes. Were all things, at all times, left to the known course of nature, the infidel might with good reason, on all occasions, deny a providential interposition. We hope therefore, that Providence may have leave at one time to point the course of nature, or at another to invert it, for purposes of the greatest importance and goodness. Whether the deluge, in particular, was from the beginning calculated for the very time in which it happened, when God foresaw the extreme wickedness of mankind; calculated, I mean, on a mere course of nature; or was miraculously brought to pass at that time, the deluge, and its effects, would be the same in themselves, and ought to be the same moral warning to us, if rightly considered. But, on the latter supposition, to which I cannot help adhering, the warning becomes more signal and striking. Howsoever, I have by suppositions formed a sort of world, and blown the globe into a bubble; I nevertheless believe the whole transaction, and indeed every thing else done by the Almighty, to have been miraculous. This I do in common with the bulk of mankind, equally concerned with me in the great event, because I will not, and they cannot, proceed philosophically on the subject. To this I am constrained (to omit other circumstances) by the recourse which all the several species of land animals and reptiles had to the ark, on the approach of destruction. And yet even in this case, recourse may be rationally had to nature, by supposing the ark to have been built on the highest ground in a country abounding with all such creatures as could not live in water. These would naturally fly from the water as it gradually rose, until they came to the top of this higher ground, and from thence into the ark. It is said that Noah was a hundred years in building the ark, and that Christ, by his Spirit, preached, during that period, to an infidel and disobedient world, wholly corrupted, and hardened in violence, iniquity, and oppression, insomuch that no other use could be made of them, but that of an example in their extirpation, of divine justice and vengeance on a reprobate generation. Our Saviour inculcates this fearful example with that of Sodom and Gomorrah, on the infidels of his own time, and of ours, who so strikingly resemble those he had then to do with, that a similar extermination, not long to be deferred, if not prevented by a speedy and general repentance, seems to await our atheism and wickedness. If so little success attended the preachings of God

himself, to prevent the excision of the Jews, well may such a wretch as I am stop his pen.

178. All animated nature wishes for liberty, just as it does for life. This is as true of every living creature, as of a goldfinch, confined to a cage, which ceases not to attempt an escape, but when necessity forces it to feed, or when, on its perch, it sings a requiem to its slavery. In man, the desire of religious and civil liberty, rightly understood, can hardly be carried too far. I say rightly understood, because, as the goldfinch wishes not for a flight to America, but only to the neighbouring fields and bushes, so the proper liberty of man hath its bounds, marked out by reason and utility. If he is allowed to think, speak, and do, whatsoever is really beneficial to himself, and the society, of which he makes a part, it is enough. More might hurt him and others. For instance, if religion proposes rewards for his good actions, and threatens punishments for his bad ones; and he is allowed to choose which he will, is it not sufficient for a rational creature, well apprized of the difference between good and evil actions, and between happiness and misery? Again, if civil society secures to him the quiet enjoyment of property honestly earned, and, at the same time gives him to understand, that if he unlawfully grasps at the property of others, or attempts to maim or murder them, he shall be punished with forfeitures, imprisonment, or death, according to the quality of his crime; ought he not to be satisfied? Can society, in order to its own preservation, do more for him, or less for itself? But if he should be fool enough to take these religious and civil terms for cramps, rather than fences to his liberty and happiness, whatsoever it may be for him, it will be the preservation of liberty and happiness to others, if the divine or human magistrate shall please to deprive him of a liberty so abused. The former hath provided a dungeon; and the latter a jail, and then a grave, for such delinquents. To avoid the former, they skulk from conscience in infidelity; and, to keep out of the latter, they have recourse to cunning, bribes, perjury, and force, according to the danger imminent. Hence the daily increasing cry for liberty, in proportion to the increase of wickedness. The same degree of liberty, which is sufficient for an honest and quiet man, cannot suffice a trickster, a robber, or a cut-throat. These want a wider field to act in, and consider themselves as already enslaved, hampered, bolted, manacled, by religion, and the law of their country, as long as there is an

estate, a coffer, or a pretty woman, kept up from them. If men of this sort have found out there is no God, and that civil government is but a cunning combination of some long-headed great ones against the rest of mankind, they are fools to divulge such secrets, which, kept to themselves, might render all others the easy dupes of men so perfectly at liberty. Yet prompted by vanity, they take as much pains to spread them about, as they would the longitude, had they discovered it. I knew a great lord expend a hundred, to cheat a neighbour of five pounds, that he might set himself off among the lower admirers of artifice. But, it must be owned, they have somewhat more substantial than mere applause in view, in preaching down religion and law, for were both taken out of the way, the patrimony of the church, and all the fortunes of the laity might, in a state of anarchy, become the easy prey of men, as unfettered as the wind. But then, what would become of liberty? Why, the strong and the artful would have it all to themselves, till superior strength and art should soon place it, together with power, in the hands of a very few, and at length, in those of one. After all, it is folly to pant for liberty, or to complain of others for taking it from us, till we have better examined, whether we are, or can be, enslaved by any body, but ourselves. In the first place, liberty of thinking in matters of religion, or what you will, can never be even abridged, but by our own prejudices and passions. If these are once subdued or banished, freedom of thinking is the immediate consequence, which should be quickly followed by searching or trying all things, and that as quickly by holding fast that which is good, or best. In doing this, as to religion, we have infallible rules to direct us; and as to other matters, experience may sufficiently help us out, or if it fails us, it is no great loss to us. As to speaking, others being at liberty to hear us or not, here liberty must be divided; and probably it would be better for us to hold our tongues, than to chatter on without end. And as to acting, it is better we should be hindered, than permitted to do mischief. But if we would do good, God takes the will for the deed; and they must answer for it, who prevent us. When we are obstructed in our intentions to do good to ourselves, this is a benefit, as often as we are mistaken (which is very often) either as to the end or the means; and supposing neither to be the case, the good of others may so interfere with ours, that both cannot be accomplished. Our neighbours are seldom so unreasonable as to

thwart us, when they are to gain nothing by it. Yet if they come across us through mere wantonness or malice, they give us an opportunity to be revenged by the return of a benefit, which will do us more good than ten thousand of our best calculated endeavours could do. To conclude, if we wish to be really as free as it is possible for us to be, let us hear Infinite Wisdom, which saith to us, 'If you come to me, you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,' shall exalt you into the 'glorious liberty of the children of God,' by making you truly sensible that neither your imperfect liberty, nor your sorry possessions in this world, were worth your low-minded anxieties about them; and that, in a very little time, you shall find yourself in a situation where your reason, your wish, and your will, shall be but one and the same thing; where all within you shall be uniform, and all about you in a perfect correspondence with all within you; where you shall be at liberty to love and enjoy for ever the source of all good, to the utmost extent of your desires; where you shall forget, and lose yourself in God.

179. As the Romans grew more dissipated and debauched, it was but reasonable their moralists should grow proportionably more strict and severe. As our holy religion loses its hold of us, greater pretences of piety are set up by some who call themselves saints; and, as if much better men than the first Christians, or even the apostles, say they themselves are perfect. A question, therefore, hath arisen, whether men, in this life, may not arrive at perfection; a dangerous question this, for if 'we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,' and may go on in our presumption, without fear, vigilance, and repentance, the most necessary helps to a good life; and, on the other side, if we believe perfection is not expected, we may be tempted to found our hopes of acceptance on very slight and partial ideas of piety and virtue, which must fail us in the event. Much is said on each side of this question, and that from Scripture, the dernier resort in all matters of this nature. The advocates for perfection allege a variety of passages, which seem at first sight to be conclusive. I shall mention but two of the strongest. Our Saviour commands us to 'be perfect, as our Father which is in heaven is perfect;' and, surely, to imitate our Father, must be the duty of all his children; for if we are not like him, we cannot hope to make a part of his family, either here, or hereafter. But as he is absolutely perfect, and no creature in heaven, much less on earth, either is, or ever can

be, absolutely perfect, an infinitely lower degree of goodness must be understood as the meaning of this requisition, or no man can possibly be saved. An approach to perfection, and the nearer the better, is all that is in the power of the heavenly host. It is also in that of man, and must be all that is required of him. More is impossible; and, therefore, not required. In this I speak of man, as aided by the Holy Spirit, who forces the goodness of no man, much less is it his purpose to make a god of any man, another impossibility. But these words of Christ, 'be ye perfect,' must be understood with an eye to that charity he had been inculcating as exemplified by the goodness of God to the evil, as well as to the good, wherein we are to imitate him as the highest of all Christian virtues, and approaching nearer to divine goodness, than any other instance of goodness in us. These words seem to be added to this particular passage, because, to love our enemies, &c. is the highest advance towards Christian perfection, that a human creature can possibly arrive at. The other passage is, 'whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot commit sin, because he is born of God.' The child of God, as such, cannot commit sin; but, like the children of other fathers, he may sometimes act undutifully, and be corrected for so doing, without being turned out and disinherited. If he does not transgress beyond the terms of forgiveness, and sincerely repents, he shall be pardoned. The same apostle, St. John, in the same epistle, tells us, that 'if a man sees his brother sin a sin, which is not unto death, he shall ask, or intercede, for his transgressing brother, and,' though he is but a brother, 'he,' that is God, 'shall give him,' his brother, 'life for them that sin not unto death.' The same apostle, and in the same epistle, saith, including himself, 'if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, for we all sin. But if we confess our sins, he,' God, 'is faithful and just,' according to his promise, 'to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' St. James saith also, including himself, 'we offend all.' The 'stars are not pure in the sight of God; and he hath seen folly,' or pravity, 'even in his angels.' What then 'can man be, who dwelleth in a house of clay,' although with St. John and St. James, he is among the best of Christians. We, as Christians, are under a covenant, not of works only, but of grace, mercy, and peace, with our Maker, who knows we are but dust and ashes. What

then is the perfection so often mentioned in the gospel? It is not absolute, but Christian perfection. A man is said to be a perfect man, who, when come to full growth, hath a sound mind in a sound body. Yet, without impeachment to the aforesaid human perfection, his judgment may sometimes err, and his body be sometimes disordered, or wounded. In like manner, he is a perfect Christian, who believes in and loves God; who loves his brother also; who hates sin in thought, word, and deed; and does all the good he can to all men. Sins of infirmity, unless often repeated, and not amended, do not call his character, as a perfect Christian, into question. To illustrate this by facts, I need but just mention the cases of David, Jonas, and St. Peter. The prevarication of the last, after he had received the Holy Spirit, is on record. It is very remarkable, that this apostle, writing to the converted Jews, who, in great numbers, apostatized from the faith, before the destruction of Jerusalem, tells them, if after they have 'escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning; and that it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandments, delivered to them.' Of this his own memory might have given him peculiar feelings. St. Paul (writing to the same Jews, without adding his name, as in other epistles, because as the apostle of the Gentiles, the Judaising Christians did not love him) delivers himself to much the same effect with St. Peter, but in terms still more alarming and damnatory; 'It is impossible,' saith he, 'for them who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance.' I cite these passages, to shew the immense difference put by the Spirit of God between apostates and all others, called by the name of Christ. On these latter, Christ himself, and the Holy Spirit, perpetually inculcate the necessity of vigilance, prayer, and repentance; repeat to them innumerable reproofs, rebukes, exhortations, warnings, as to men, who may sin, and be recovered. Perhaps no man, Christ only excepted, ever carried the character of a Christian higher towards perfection than St. Paul, and yet he, writing to the Philippians, denies that he had then attained to perfection. 'He had,' as he tells

us, 'accounted all things but dross, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord;' that 'not depending on his own righteousness, which is of the law (of any law), but on the righteousness of God, which is by faith, he had laboured to attain unto the resurrection of the dead, not as though he had already attained, either were already perfect,' but he says, 'I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I am also apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended' (that is, laid hold on Christ, as Christ had laid hold on him), 'but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' Here is the portrait of a true Christian, already good, but not entirely satisfied with his own attainments, and therefore struggling for a farther advance towards Christian perfection; of a man, not unmindful of his own weakness, nor of the repeated warnings, given by Christ and himself, to all Christians, to beware of the enemy, and, as good soldiers, 'to fight the good fight of faith.' 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me,' saith Christ. 'He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.' 'Stand fast in the faith,' saith the apostle, to all believers, as much as to say, beware of wavering. 'Let them who have believed in God, be careful to maintain good works.' 'Shew me your faith by your works,' saith St. James. Faith is set forth to, and required of, a Christian, as the grand spring of good works, indeed as the only spring of works acceptable with God. But lest the wrong head, and worse heart, of an enthusiast, laying hold of the doctrine of St. Paul in various parts of his epistles, but particularly in the third, fourth, and fifth chapter to the Romans, should take faith to stand instead of good works, and so give himself little or no trouble about his life and conversation, let him only go forward to the sixth chapter, which will cure him of his wicked mistake, if he does not prefer his own to the inspiration of St. Paul. There he will find, that the good Christian 'is buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe, that we shall also live with him. Reckon ye also yourselves to be

dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.' This exhortation, if fairly attended to, would do infinitely more towards the advancement of Christian perfection, than all that can be done by man, whatsoever pretensions he may set up to an inspiration, not only refuted, but fully proved to be from beneath, by the word of God himself, which he hath attested by his own miraculous interposition, and left not in the power of false prophets, either to support the credit of new inspirations, or of their forced glosses upon the old. St. Peter strongly enforces the necessity of faith, virtue, knowledge, and charity, &c. and tells us, 'that he that lacketh these things is blind, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old (or former) sins. Wherefore,' saith he, 'give diligence to make your calling and election sure.' What, then? Is our calling or election nothing more than the light of Christianity afforded us in the gospel, and the aid of the Holy Spirit, the first of which we may forget, the second of which we may resist and quench? Does our election render us infallible? And is there not a possibility of falling from grace? Why otherwise this, and such other exhortations? Why, otherwise, among such as hold themselves to be perfect and infallible, is there such a world of preaching and exhortation? They certainly have no small doubts of their own perfection, as had dying Cromwell, when he asked his chaplains, if there was a possibility of falling from grace? They answered, No, and he cried out, Then I am safe, and so he died. But what occasion had he to ask this question, who was himself so mightily inspired, but that he doubted of the point; doubted, whether all the blood he had waded through, in gratification of his ambition, was pleasing or displeasing in the sight of God? Men may take it into their heads to think they cannot sin, either because they, in their opinion, find nothing at all amiss in their thoughts, words, or actions, which never was the case of any man, but Christ; or because they believe, that the same action may be very sinful in another, which is perfectly innocent in the elect and perfect. If a man of this way of thinking, does such an action as all mankind condemn, and as God abhors, and boasts it to the world, or pleads it with God as meritorious, can we suppose a man in a more deplorable condition? Need I say this in a Christian country? Did the Holy Ghost encourage him to this most flagitious principle? Yet Cromwell, and all his inspired soldiers,

had no other principle to justify all the devastation, plunder, and murder, they committed. But, to conclude, if a Christian, in order to be forgiven by God, is required to forgive another four hundred and ninety times, I conclude it is because he himself stands in need of forgiveness for yet a greater number of sins, and possibly, of a more heinous nature.

180. There is nothing, which mankind are with so much difficulty brought to believe or assent to, as a religion wherein the corruptions of their nature are condemned, and their sensual pleasures restrained and mortified, although it is a religion infinitely excellent in itself, and absolutely necessary to them. For this purpose, how many ancient prophecies must be accomplished! How many miracles performed! How many martyrs crucified, or burnt alive! On the other hand, no sooner is the most flimsy argument started against that religion, so formidable to human frailty, than it is without examination received as demonstrative, and handed about among infidels as unanswerable. An instance of this appears in Brydone's letters from Sicily. Here we are told of a promontory of lava from Mount Etna, pushed into the sea two thousand years ago, which hath, in all that time, collected but a thin or scanty covering of soil, Letter vi. and in the next letter, we are given to understand, that near Jaci, in digging into a bed of lava, seven strata of that substance were perforated, and between each two of them, a thick stratum of fat soil was found. On this the ingenious writer builds an argument, that the world must be fourteen thousand years old, say Moses and our chronologers what they will. For the truth of the data here fairly stated by me, as Brydone gives them, we have nothing to depend on but Mr. Brydone's word; and he nothing but a superficial cast of his eye from a distance on the promontory; and for the seven strata, &c. nothing but the report of an infidel priest, who does not so much as say that he saw these strata laid open. Now as to the age of the promontory, it can be only guessed at from the words of Diodorus Siculus, and from the report of the same infidel priest, who, it seems, found some Roman inscriptions thereon, but says nothing of the age or purport of said inscriptions. But right or wrong, so old the promontory must be, to support the argument of Brydone. And as to the scanty covering of soil upon it, a point equally necessary to the goodly argument, Brydone trusts for that to a distant view of its produce; but finds himself embarrassed with some tall trees growing out of it,

which, without any closer examination, he takes upon him to say, are rooted in certain crevices, where they might have a greater depth of soil. His crevices, we know, could have received no more than their proportion of such matter as fell equally over the whole promontory, but might have been, and undoubtedly were, washed off by the waves from the other parts of the rock. Had he told us the breadth of this promontory, and tried the depth of its soil at an equal distance from the sea on each side, we might have made some judgment, whether the waves, continually washing its sides, and there preventing the accumulation of soil, might not have done the same on its flatter and less exposed surface at top. This would have done a little more justice to truth than he intended. In his next letter, he takes up the report of the seven strata, &c. but never troubles himself to ask, who they were, or for what reason, some people had dug down through a rock of lava, nor to what depth they dug before they came to these strata, or whether, in quest of somewhat else, they dug any deeper. They did not seem to quarry for any thing but an objection to Moses. No, they had done enough for that purpose, and then held their hands. But to make his argument so far logical, ought he not to have given us the exact depth of soil, at least on the top of the promontory, and the depth of the fat soil between every two strata of lava at Jaci? This he hath not at all done. And yet, without doing this, how could he conclude the age of the world to be fourteen thousand years? For instance, had he told us, that the soil, at deepest, on the promontory, was one foot, which was all that could be accumulated in two thousand years, and exactly a foot deep also in every one of the seven strata of the same substance at Jaci, then his multiplying seven by two might have given his argument somewhat like a fair conclusion; and but half like, as I shall presently shew. To prevent a scrutiny, such as I am making, he carefully avoids bringing his premises together, giving one of them in his sixth, and the other in his seventh letter. Supposing however he had laid them as close as in a syllogism, and exhibited the measure of depths accurately taken by himself, as I have stated it, his conclusion of fourteen thousand years must have been miserably precarious. The promontory, exposed to winds and waves, could not have gathered soil so fast from the showers of ashes sent down from Mount Etna, and other volcanos, as the ground of Jaci, so much better sheltered, and so much better supplied with fat earth washed

down by every shower from higher grounds adjacent. Besides, volcanos throw out various sorts of matter; stones, lava, and ashes, are not all they eject. Water, mud, and one or two other sorts of substances, which, in some time, crumble into common soil, run down from thence in the dreadful torrent. The lava itself is not always uniformly dense. The metallic, or heavier part, flows at the bottom of the stream; and at top, a more light, porous, and friable stuff, which, in time, exposed to the air, crumbles into a fatty sort of earth. The river Alcantara hath cut itself a channel fifty or sixty feet in depth, through a rock of lava, which proves, that at least some sorts of lava are not so tough and hard as others. Chesnut trees, of immense size, grow out of the lava on Mount Etna, with the help of its ashes; and these ashes, almost as heavy as sand, falling from eruptions of Vesuvius, sometimes cover the streets of Naples, five miles distant from that smaller volcano, to the depth of five or six inches. In how much greater abundance must they fall on the close adjacencies of Etna? In the midst of these known experiences, what can be made of Brydone's calculations? Of arguments, vomited out, as it were, by the mouth of hell, against the truth of our holy religion? Herculaneum was buried seventy feet under an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, in digging through which they throw up the matter of various strata, and among others, fat and black moulds. Lava is found in so many parts of the world, where there is not, or ever was, the smallest trace of volcanos, that we must think those lands once lay nearer to subterraneous fires, where alternate beds of lava and earth might have been laid over each other. The Giant's causeway, and the masses of basaltes, wherever found, is nothing else but lava. These, and the innumerable calcinations, found every where, induced Buffon to believe, that this globe was a part of the sun, and forced off by a comet. It is not easy to say what compelled this Frenchman to go so far for the effects of a fire, continually burning under his feet. He went on better grounds, when he took it for granted, on sight of so many submarine shells on our high mountains, that our present earth was once under the sea; and going so deep for these shells, it is odd how he missed the subterraneous, and I will add, subaqueous fires. But, like many other philosophers, he was unfortunate in a favourite hypothesis, that the volcanic fires are confined to the bellies of their mountains, and extend neither farther nor deeper, by which he wonderfully shortened

the course of earthquakes. To return to Mr. Brydone, had the principles of his argument been at all ascertained, which they are not; and had that argument been regularly and rationally formed, which it is far from being; it could have concluded nothing for his infidel purpose, on account, that so many other considerations, not adverted to by him, must occur to subvert it. The eruptions of Etna have been so frequent, have happened at such unequal distances of time, and consisted of such unequal quantities of lava, tufa, ashes, &c. that no calculation, like that attempted by Brydone, can be founded thereon. It would be easier to count the drops of rain that fall on the whole island of Sicily in two thousand years; for, in this case, a square vessel of a certain diagonal, exposed to the open air, might shew the quantity of rain water received in a given time, which multiplied by a square measure of the whole island, might give the quantity falling on the whole in a year, and that again multiplied by two thousand, might bring the amount like, and but like, an average. In comparison with Mr. Brydone, the Manx man was modest, who maintained that Peeltown castle in the Isle of Man was built only three hundred years before the creation. Had Etna been a volcano before the days of Homer, it is highly probable he must have heard of it, as his learning extended to every thing extraordinary throughout the Mediterranean, and its adjacencies, particularly to Sicily, with which he was well acquainted; and he must have made Etna thunder in Ionics for Ulysses, when he brought him to that island. Virgil fails not to do it for Æneas, the contemporary of Ulysses; but then Virgil flourished many ages later than Homer. Thus hath Brydone racked his own reason, and the age of the world, till each is wholly out of joint. Yet down this goes with the loose, and infidel, and modern philosophers, as they style themselves, like a mathematical demonstration; and all the evidences of Christianity, in their scales, kick the beam. He does but nibble in other parts of his work on infidelity. As a patron of electricity, he erects it into a sort of soul, and would needs set it up with the help of a nerve or two, for more than an organ of sensation, for a percipient *per se*. He ventures to prophecy that it will, when once well understood, take the place of all other natural philosophy. It may be so; but I can hardly believe, think as it will, than it ever can be the sole philosopher. Whatever an electric soul could have done in this writer, as to his philosophy, and infidelity, I cannot thank it for his wit.

God hath chosen the weak things of this world, me for instance, to confound the mighty. The enemy of all good is forced to take a contrary course, and choose out the brightest and most ingenious men to maintain his cause, which otherwise cannot be maintained. Just so a client, conscious of a bad cause at bar, fees the most eloquent lawyer. In the last letter from Palermo of this very agreeable writer, he seems, as it were, to renew his amour with Mount Etna, and cries it up for its beauty and its bounty to mankind. With the particulars taken notice of by him, as highly useful to the Sicilians, he might have mentioned some others, extending far beyond the limits of their island, as purging, and impregnating the atmosphere with various ingredients, particularly with his own favourite electricity, some of which contribute to the fertility of our lands; others, to the condensation and expansion of the atmosphere; and some, perhaps, to animal respiration. Above all, why should he forget its moral use? The wicked are threatened, by a greater Author than him, with a lake of fire, after the day of judgment; and how can a moral philosopher take it into his head, that there will be no judgment on morally free agents? How, that no punishments will fall afterward on the gross abusers of that freedom? And how that those punishments will have no analogy to fire? The same great Author assures us, we shall have bodies to be judged, rewarded, or punished in. In these bodies, then immortal, the wicked may suffer by fire; and Etna may, with its wide and dreadful mouth, preach this part of the gospel to hardened sinners, more apt to listen to infernal thunders, than the call of divine love. I have no spice of the superstition, and, I trust, not much more of the wickedness of Etna's inhabitants, who say, they frequently hear the groans of the damned in the belly of their mountain; and once listened to the devils, articulating, Make room for the rich Antonio, the very instant of that man's death at Palermo. If nothing else, their wickedness sufficiently refutes the falsity of their reports. Which, in regard to Antonio, &c. are ridiculous; but, methinks, a person of Mr. Brydone's acumen might have overheard the interior inhabitants of Mount Etna whispering to Recupero the attack on Moses; at least, that for his own credit, he should himself have accurately examined the facts, on the strength of which he seems with pleasure to retail that attack. On the other hand, however, is it not dangerous (tell me, ye Christians of too easy virtue), to allegorize the penal fires,

threatened by Christ, in whom ye pretend to believe, into somewhat gentler than torment? What would ye save by allegorizing? You ought surely to know that truth may be uttered in a figure; and that all the truth of an allegory consists in a true and real proportion or resemblance between the thing representing, and the thing adumbrated, in every allegory. If then the torments of the damned will be as severe as those by fire, why will you run the risk of either? And yet this risk ye run, or deceive yourselves into somewhat worse, by indulging yourselves in sin on a supposition, that the penal fires are not strictly literal, and so whiffling them down into somewhat unknown, unfelt, and at length perhaps into somewhat as imperceptible hereafter, as it is now to your minds. If for abusing your liberty here, and for kindling and blowing up the fire of your lusts and passions in this life, after due warning given you, justice should imprison you in penal fires hereafter, what need of transporting you to some distant dungeon of the creation, when here, in the bowels of this very earth, on which you have horribly sinned, which you prefer to God and virtue, and wish to remain in for ever, you should find your place of punishment? There is not any one thing in the creation that ought not, nay, that does not, preach up religion and virtue to a thinking mind. Tempests, earthquakes, volcanos, are among the loudest of these preachers. Hear, tremble, and beware. These threaten, and frequently inflict. But wars, famines, and pestilences, spread the menaces of God to greater distances over guilty nations; while troubles, adversities, distresses, sicknesses, deaths, carry them home, as corrections or judgments, to transgressing individuals, over the whole face of this terrigenous globe. Religion clearly articulates their voice. What now can be done with such haughty offenders as will not suffer themselves to be persuaded by these terrors of the Lord, but to shut them up in the mines, to be made for ever yet more persuasive terrors to the moral world? Could the fine writer I have been dealing with, do no better, in crawling over Mount Etna, than to pick up, in broken scraps, the lava of an infernal argument in favour of infidelity, as it were, from the very month of hell? It would have been better surely, he had never gone abroad, but contented himself with a homely mediocrity, than to have travelled as an ingenious factor for the importation of a luxury so pernicious, into a country too fruitful already in articles of the same kind. It is happy, however, that witty as he is, he hath shewn himself in this

attempt a very flimsy reasoner. Yet so many more superficial thinkers are there than himself, for whom he wrote, that his silly piece of stuff is taken among them for a perfect oracle. Weak reasoner! despicable readers! Lucretius, the atheist, concluded, on far better reasons, that this world could not have existed for many ages before the siege of Troy.

181. The Pythagoreans have said that their music of the spheres is too loud to be heard, as much as to say, our ears are too little to take in a section of its undulation, so as to perceive it to be a curve. I believe our naturalists have not sufficiently tried, whether flies, and minute insects, can hear; or if they can, whether they start at the sound of a cannon near them. The meaning however of the Pythagoreans probably was, that few men have mental ears for the spherical music; and, I say, perhaps fewer still for the celestial music of Christianity, against which most men stop their ears, their mental ears I mean, because loud thunders of damnation form its base. To these, and a mixture of others, who have hearing souls and hearts, our Saviour repeatedly cries out, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.'

182. If we would know how little this world is, we should look at it through the eye of faith, not that faith lessens it, for it only shews it in its own minuteness, while the fleshly eye magnifies it into an apparent greatness. Through the latter, that country is very extensive, and its king a very great man. But look at it in a map, drawn by the former, and you see it shrunk into a littleness scarcely visible. With the same eye too follow its king into his grave, where the earth above him becomes transparent to this eye, and you see an object which would shock you, were it not as despicable as it is frightful. By your fleshly eye you see the sun by day, and the moon and stars by night, and farther you cannot see. But by the eye of faith you see these brilliant bodies fade into somewhat like darkness, as soon as this eye catches the sight of other beings incomparably more illustrious, throughout the higher expanse of heaven; and one being especially, infinitely more glorious than them all, so that when he is beheld they sink into nothing. The range of the natural eye, or the boasted sensorium of philosophy, extends to a very few objects, perceives them but indistinctly, gilded over with vanity, blurred by vexation, and rendered unimportant to the soul through the limited concern she hath in them; for through both she knows the day is hasten-

ing forward, when they shall burst like empty bubbles, 'shall pass away with a great noise, shall melt with fervent heat,' and 'the earth also with the works that are therein shall be consumed.' Seeing through the eye of faith, that 'all these things shall be dissolved,' the soul asks herself, 'what manner of persons men ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, expecting a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,' and preparing themselves for that grand and happy system of things? Confined to the dark room of our bodies, we can peep but a little way round us, and a very little way before us, through our senses. Speculation gives but a little wider circle to our knowledge; and, as in this operation, we often overstrain the mental eye, we are usually so lost in mistake and confusion, that we have reason to repent our sallies, and wish we had humbly stayed at home. In pity to our souls, thus bewildered in regard to our great concern, God hath been graciously pleased to enlarge our views, particularly as to futurity, by revelation and faith. A man without faith hath no world to trust to but this, and here is nothing to build on but sand. All below the sun is full of disappointment and trouble. The rich and prosperous think the worst of it is, that all is short; but in this the believer comforts himself, because he looks forward to a more abiding place, where all is great, good, and eternal. If man is to take up with the beast that perisheth, why was he fitted for greater and better things? Why such capacities? Why such desires? Why was he made morally free and accountable, if no account is to be taken of him? If he wilfully triumphs in wickedness, is he no where, and at no time, to suffer for oppression and cruelty, as if there were no justice in his Maker? Is he who hath for righteousness been persecuted and murdered by this oppressor, never to rise again, nor to be comforted by the good God? Is it possible that God should make no distinction between virtue and vice, between the best and worst of men? Faith avers the reverse, and reason seconds faith with all its force. God alone can dictate in this case; and reason, when it is allowed to operate, receives the dictate with full conviction, which is but another word for faith.

183. Because God reproved the speeches of Job's hard-hearted comforters, too many readers have taken all they said as not grounded on truth and reason. It is certain, however, their speeches, as considered in themselves, and adapted to the general

course of things in this world, are not only just, but sublime and admirable. Wisdom, prudence, and virtue, are in the main attended with such happiness as the present state of things can afford; and, on the other side, folly and wickedness are here generally cursed with temporal afflictions and miseries. Even in this life God leaves not himself, and the cause of goodness, without witness. We, for the most part, sit down with the Hebrews, or Canaanites, as we choose, to a sweet, or bitter meal. The full reward of virtue, and punishment of vice, is to follow a final judgment. In the mean time, the language of Job's comforters, of the Mosaic law, and of Solomon's proverbs, speak almost the same thing. But the error of those comforters consists in this, that they make a wrong application of right maxims, not knowing the case of Job, not knowing indeed that there are sometimes extraordinary exceptions to the general rules laid down by them, and commonly justified by experience. They seem not to have been aware of a very necessary distinction between God's permitting and doing evil, nor of any author to whom the latter should be ascribed. Hence it is, that the course of their arguments bears as hard upon our Saviour as on Job. Twice our blessed Saviour styles the devil the prince of this world, and St. Paul calls him the god of this world. It is owing to the permission of God, that in this state of trial the malignant being exercises a limited power in bringing misery on good men, and prosperity to the wicked. In all this the cunning of the devil is fooled by his own malice. Good angels and good men could not have been the proper, at least the voluntary instruments in bringing Christ to the cross, and therefore could not have been instrumental in offering up the great atonement for sin. This was a work fit only for the folly and wickedness of the devil, of Judas, of Caiaphas, of Pilate, &c. who, under their mistaken notion of preventing piety and virtue by the death of their divine Author, did really establish a universal system of righteousness, and work salvation for all men. This is a mystery, which deserves better to be considered than it hath been; for it is no sooner well considered, than it throws light on religion, redemption, providence, and the origin of evil.

184. In a very great many places of holy Scripture, folly signifies not only what it commonly expresses, but sin and wickedness also. Indeed, properly speaking, there is no sin that does not originate in folly. The truly wise, as such, never sin. He only sins, who does not clearly see through the deceitfulness of

temptation, who does not rightly discern, that all sin must end in affliction and misery, ten times greater than all the profits or pleasures, wherewith temptation allures him. A man advanced in years must have been very inattentive to the course of his own life, or wholly blind, if he hath not feelingly felt the truth of these observations. That folly begets sin, and that sin begets misery, is a short genealogy, and too evident to be doubted by any one at all acquainted with moral heraldry. Yet the artful and cunning man knows nothing of it, though there is nothing so plentifully, or so severely taught in the school of experience. In that of religion, it makes one half of all that is learnt; the other is, that wisdom begets virtue, and virtue happiness. Whoever examines the moral world, angels or men, will find, that God has established these in the natural constitution of things, and governs the universe by them. Yet the devil, his agents, and bad men of all sorts, howsoever artful otherwise they may have proved themselves, and howsoever long and deep their schemes have been, shew themselves wholly ignorant of these leading maxims. The devil, by seducing mankind, hath eventually led them out of Paradise into heaven, if they do not refuse the redemption offered to them. When the Redeemer came to work salvation for them by his religion and death, this enemy of God, and all that is good, partly ignorant of the blessed design of the Redeemer, thought he could no way so well gratify his own malignant envy and spite, nor stifle the religion of Christ, as by his death; and therefore stirred up all his instruments, Judas the traitor, Caiaphas the Atheist, and Pilate the Pagan and iniquitous judge, to crucify the Lord of Life, the very thing which alone could save the world, and could verify the truth of Christ's religion, that religion which alone could reform mankind, and bring them to heaven. See the folly of this artful enemy in bringing about that great event, so happy for us all, which no good being, angel, or man, could have had any hand in! When the reformation was carrying on by the Lutherans in Germany, and the Calvinists in France and Switzerland, the emperor and the king of France called the council of Trent together, much against the mind of the pope, in order to reform the church in its head, as they foolishly called the pope, and members; the pope, at that very council, attempted to ruin the authority of the bishops whereof it consisted, but failed; and the Calvinists every where cried out, No king, no bishop. This alarmed the kings and bishops, put an end to the council,

and stopped the course of the reformation. The kings and bishops of that council were too much bigoted to Popery to labour sincerely in the good work of reformation. Providence therefore was pleased to let a work come to nothing, which was likely to do more hurt than good. But it is to be observed, that the pope, the most consummate of all politicians, defeated his own intention by his attack upon the bishops, and eventually stabbed himself as a bishop, with the dagger he aimed at the rest; and that the Calvinists disappointed theirs by dealing in politics, contrary to the express prohibition of the Holy Spirit, and by their attack upon the ordinance of Christ in his servants, the bishops. See here how the cunning of every party proved itself folly, and defeated its own views! Had the emperor, the princes of Europe, the pope, the bishops, and the Calvinists, aimed at nothing, on that occasion, but the restoration of Christianity to its primitive purity and integrity, the blessing of God on their endeavours, and and a happy reformation, would infallibly have been the consequence. The god of this world being permitted by Providence, and invited by all the parties, prejudice and cunning took the lead; and all came to nothing, or something worse than nothing. The blessed work of reformation hath been reserved for better hands, and a more convenient time, perhaps for the total downfall of antichrist, and the calling of the Jews, when God will take it into his own hands, and demonstrate to all mankind, that he alone is equal to so great a work, and that mankind are not, as indeed they never were, able to reform themselves. Here and there, and now and then, a good and able man may arise, whose honest intentions, and faithful labours, may, blessed by the Holy Spirit, put forward this work to some extent, but a general reformation is not to be looked for, but at the hands of God. Such is the obliquity and crookedness of human understanding, that nothing but divine wisdom can reduce it to a right line. So deeply rooted is the corruption, and so obstinate the vanity and prejudices of mankind, that nothing less than a divine power, awfully and irresistibly demonstrated, can suppress them. In the mean time, infidelity prevails, and is likely to prevail, so as that when Christ comes to execute the great work, he shall hardly find faith enough on earth to aid, even in a low degree, the purpose of his interposition.

185. Solomon hath said, shame shall be the promotion of fools. The hunters after preferment should consider this. For

their benefit I wish to subjoin an Irish paradox, that there is more danger in a fall upward than downward.

186. There are innumerable parts of Ireland fitter for the production of liquorice, than any place in Yorkshire. Were this very medicinal, and most agreeable root, largely propagated in Ireland, it would have great and happy effects. Cut into short pieces, bruised, and thrown into a tea-pot, it would give of itself a most wholesome and pleasant infusion, with a proper quantity of boiling water; and so cut and bruised would afford, in every respect, a better sort of sweetening for coffee, chocolate, and tea of all kinds, than sugar. At all times, but particularly when sugars rise to an enormous price, it would save the kingdom a large annual sum. It would also answer full as well in made wines, and come a great deal cheaper, if we had it of our own growth, a point that ought to be well considered by so poor a country.

187. He that is raised from a low to a high condition in the world, without growing proud, is a slater.

188. There is nothing in the holy Scriptures so apt to surprise and shock their readers, as the fall of Solomon, from a degree of wisdom surpassing that of all other men, to the lowest degree of folly, to say nothing of its wickedness, to which a human creature can possibly sink, that of worshipping a stick or stone. Here is wisdom plunging into stupidity; and piety into idolatry. Our surprise at this may be somewhat lessened, if we consider Solomon as only a man, setting out with natural talents of the most exquisite kind, and passions, equally violent, in whom, a case but too frequent, the natural sensations proved too strong for the spiritual principles. Solomon heard more rapture in the same music, saw more magnificence in the splendour of the same court and in the same stately buildings, and more beauty in the same women, than other men did. He felt stronger thrillings of pleasure on a set of finer nerves, than other men are qualified to feel. The lives of such men are usually made up of flights and falls. They sometimes do greater things, but oftener plunge into grosser and more shameful vices, than are exhibited by the mediocrity of common men. His example stands on high, as a useful beacon to the whole human race, but more especially to those who possess, or think they possess, uncommon talents, to be humble and watchful over their own ways. A question, much debated among the learned, arises from the his-

tory of this prodigious man fairly given us in the book of truth, whether, in the latter part of his life, he became sensible of his sin and folly, and arose again from that folly? In my opinion, he did. It seems improbable, that a mind like his, and formerly so favoured by the good Spirit, should continue always to grovel in the mire of lust and idolatry. In his Ecclesiastes, the last of his writings, there are evident signs of one awaking out of a lethargy. Here he sets himself forth, as one who had given the reins to appetite and passion, as one who had gone the rounds of pomp and pleasure, on a larger scale, and with a freer swing, than other men, less elevated, or enriched, could have done; and repeatedly pronounces all his works, and all his enjoyments, to have been nothing better than vanity and vexation of spirit. This is not all. He says, chap. vii. ver. 15, 'all things have I seen in the days of my vanity;' that is, when he was a man of pleasure and a fool. Ver. 23, 'I said I will be wise, but it was far from me;' that is, I was stupid enough to fall on my knees to a pitiful thing of wood or stone. But to make his repentance still a clearer point, as women had led him into his idolatry and wickedness, hear him in the four last verses of the same chapter. 'I find more bitter than death, the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands; whoso pleaseth God, shall escape from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her. Behold this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account; which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not; one man among a thousand have I found, but a woman among all those have I not found. Lo this only have I found, that God made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions' to gratify his vanity, and his fondness for pomp and pleasure, whereof his idols were the most flagrant proofs of his folly, and the worst! To me it seems, that no set of reflections could have been more exactly adapted to the peculiar sins of Solomon, nor more expressive of his sincere remorse, for he who might have valued himself so highly on his wisdom, and certainly did, yet humbles himself with a declaration, that it was far from him, although he had resolved to distinguish himself by it. The snare on which, next to his own weakness, he tacitly charges his miserable entanglement, is no other than that which caught his father, Sampson, and Adam; no other than that which caught our glorious English hero, who in the morning frequently rushed like a thunderbolt among the enemies of his country, and, in the evening of

the same day, poured out his money and his tears over the wounded officers, soldiers, and prisoners, with all the tenderness of an affectionate father, having expended of his own property, it is said, more than sixty thousand guineas, during the late war in Germany. What vices! What virtues! Springing from the same fertile soil in David, Solomon, and the M. of G. what but the true religion can weed out the former, and give the whole vigour of the soil to the latter, in men of this make? Never greater intrepidity was exemplified by any one man, nor a more melting tenderness of heart by any other man, than by the M. of G; but they met in his one breast a junction, rarely seen in any other, never in a degree so exalted. A lion in the morning, softened into a lamb in the evening, would hardly afford a more surprising sight. The skirt of Saul in the hand of David, and the purse of guineas in that of L. G. would almost persuade us, that they could never fall. But man when left to himself, is only a man.

189. Before the times of Agesilaus and Lysander, when foreign conquests began to be affected at Lacedemon, and money to maintain armies must be acquired, a Spartan was exalted above the little weaknesses and pleasures of other men. The world with its pomps and allurements, were nothing to him. His soul, hard and firm, had nothing in it but the love of glory and his country. As he contemned pleasure, so he could in some instances enjoy pain. To him a very plain coat, and his mess of black broth were every thing. Such, in regard to this world, is a true Christian. But then his soul, vacant of earthly things, is filled with God and heaven. Transported with these, he scarcely feels sensual pleasure, or bodily pain. The dish, the bottle, and the harlot, have no hold of him; while the faggot and the flames only serve to elevate his raptured soul from vanity and vexation here, to endless joy and glory in the presence of his Father, Saviour, and Comforter. This world could not fill the soul of Alexander, or Cæsar; nor can it that of any other man. Somewhat more is still wanting to the soul, made for greater things. Christianity alone can supply this. When I see a man, high fed, and gorgeously attired, strutting in the pride of his foolish heart, I am apt, at first, to be seized with a mixture of pity and indignation, till I look inward, and find myself on the strut of that very pity and indignation. Here I sink to the same, or a lower species of worms, with the man I pitied.

190. Solve the following riddle, if you can. Who is he, with whom you are most intimate, and yet with whom you are hardly at all acquainted? Between whom and you there is the warmest love, and nevertheless a most dangerous enmity? Of whose understanding you have the highest opinion, whom nevertheless you have oftenest found to be a fool, if you are not a fool yourself? Who is he, whom preferably to all others, you most confide in, though, on most occasions, he does nothing but deceive and betray you? Who above all others wishes to save you, and yet almost incessantly labours to damn you? Who is he, that always checks you for your evil doings, and yet perpetually tempts you to repeat them? Who is he, that applauds you above your merits when you do any thing praiseworthy, and yet flatters you into vanity in doing an action, for which you ought to be ashamed? Who, whether you do well, or ill, is always at hand to help you? Who is he, that hath led you into all your troubles, although he always knew he must suffer his full share of them? Who is he, whom you know to be both a hero and a poltroon? Who is he, that would never suffer you to fix on any system of sound principles, but hath led you a wild goose chace of opinions, appetites, and passions, in pursuit of happiness, though you, all the time knew, or shrewdly suspected it must end in misery? Who is he, that perpetually invites you to eat, drink, sing, dance, and laugh with him to excess, and yet know he must, in consequence, at length sit down with you on Job's dunghill, to curse the day of his birth, and yours? Who is he, whom you believe to be a Christian, and a saint, but know to be rather an Atheist and a devil? This riddle is worded as to men, but is equally addressed to women. Whoever, of either sex, shall rightly solve it, shall have heaven for a reward.

191. For the sake of health, medicines are taken by weight and measure; so ought food to be, or by some similar rule. The quantity of food swallowed in the day, if above the demands of nature, is at first arbitrary, and soon becomes habitual. But any one by a week's perseverance, may break through the habit, as to somewhat more or less, and afterward will find very little trouble in proceeding on his newly adopted quantity, at least for a considerable length of time, especially if the quantity is less than the former.

192. There is a certain island, no matter whether in the South or North Sea, in which somewhat is observable, too common to

merit the name of a phenomenon, and yet perhaps deserving a place in natural history; it is this. Here a good many women, and some men, have a double weasand, or two wind-pipes a piece, which alternately perform the offices of inspiration and respiration; by which means, while they are talking out the air at one pipe, they are drawing in a fresh supply at the other. Hence it comes to pass, that one of those shall, for hours together, incessantly talk, without the stop of a single comma, or the infinitesimal of a second. The effect, in this case, so fully demonstrates the cause, that, to have recourse to anatomical inquiry for a proof here, is altogether superfluous. A young gentleman, of some address, was placed in the same drawing-room with five very respectable ladies, of this formation, who all talked to him at once, on different subjects, so rapidly, that he did not, at first, well know how to behave himself; but he soon fell into a method of attention that pleased them all. Fixing his eyes on a spot of the floor, as nearly central to them all as he could, he caught, in rotation, a little of what every one was saying, and adapted a word or two, pretty well, to the drift of the discourse, held by this or that lady—Certainly—No, no—Prodigious!—What?—Clever indeed!—Puppy.—Hah!—Sad jade!—Saucy—Ugly—Silly—Out upon her!—Horrid nose!—Monstrous!—Thus he went on for a good while, and as, towards the latter end, they grew a little satirical on their own sex, his interjections became inevitably acrimonious, by which he acquired the character of a well-bred man. The ladies liked this young gentleman the better, because probably they had never before that time been favoured with an audience so complaisant.

193. A certain bishop, hearing that a countryman in his neighbourhood said, he had wind and weather at his will, sent for him. *B.* Do you say you have wind and weather at your will? *C. M.* I do, my lord. *B.* You do! I hope you are but a coxcomb. *C. M.* You, too, my lord, would have wind and weather at your will, if you were as good a man as I am. *B.* As you! *C. M.* It is some years since I found myself to be a fool. *B.* That is a contradiction, for he is a wise man, who hath found himself to be a fool. *C. M.* Wise man, or fool, I perceived that, if the wind and weather had been left to my ordering, I should have directed both but ill for myself, and worse for other people. I then considered the wisdom of God as a better director than my folly; so, from that time, I made the will of God my own in regard to wind

and weather, and wish I could do the same in every thing else. When it rains, I say that is well, for it brings up the grass; when it snows, well too, for snow manures the ground; when it blows a storm, I cry, excellent! for that purges the air, and saves fifty thousand lives at land, for one it destroys at sea. This I said once, when the wind blew down my chimney, and hurt one of my arms. *B.* Well, go away; but don't make your silly neighbours believe you are a wizard. *C. M.* A wizard! no; but I have brought Tom Gate and George Snipe to think of wind and weather as I do. *B.* It was well done. Fare you well. *C. M.* Your lordship will not turn me out in so heavy a rain? *B.* What! is not that rain to your own will and wish? *C. M.* It is; for I am sure it is doing a great deal of good to mankind: but as I came out in a hurry, when it was fair, without my wide coat, so heavy a rain might do me some harm. *B.* John, take him down to a slice of bread and cheese, and a tankard of ale, till the shower is over.

194. Whether a man is regularly sent, or he of his own head takes upon him, to preach the gospel, he must basely forget what he is sent to do, or treacherously betray the cause he pretends to maintain, if he does not preach Christ Jesus, and him crucified for the sins of the world; if he does not strenuously hold forth faith in God the Father, through his only begotten Son Christ Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, as the sole spring of good works and virtue. His preaching what he calls morality, independent of this faith, is but blowing chaff and dust in the eyes of God's people. Morality, not grounded on religion, that is, on an expectation of a future account, and of rewards and punishments to follow that account, is nothing better than mere deception, is wholly without power; and without trust in the doctrine and death of the Redeemer, is in man a low and conceited dependence on himself, which must in the event deceive him. He knows nothing, who is not sensible that, of all animals, man is the least able to shift for himself, by far the least able to act up to the station he is in, the least able to draw from within himself the necessary resources of that virtue which is required of him by his Maker. But if he faithfully applies to his Maker for help, he quickly finds all the springs of his nature set at work by the true religion. He finds his hopes and fears called forth to the service of virtue, and these powerful engines of a wise self-love, exalted and dignified by gratitude, and love of God, into the noblest mo-

tives of goodness towards him, and towards his fellow-creatures. Panætius, Cicero, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius, justly esteemed the greatest genii of the ages they lived in, detesting the gods, and despising the religion of the country, could not trust their systems of morality to either. They therefore were forced to draw their motives for moral virtue from human nature, as they found it. They pressed the beauty and utility of virtue, the deformity and misery of vice, with all the force of reason and eloquence, to a few readers, and to little purpose even among them. Human corruption proved too hard for their fine-spun reasonings. Strength was wanting on the side of virtue, for God was not called in, because the writers knew him not, nor how to have access to him. They had no Mediator with him, nor so much as a just pretence to plead his authority for their dictates. Seneca and Marcus Aurelius might possibly have availed themselves of Christianity for this purpose; but they held that religion in too much contempt, and were too full of themselves, to ground their moral systems on a religion, preached, for the most part, by men of low condition and of little learning. Long before their time, and indeed before Christ came into the world, Plato, somehow or other, had seen the necessity of a more competent instruction, to be sent from heaven, to teach mankind the knowledge of God, and of a true religion. But now that Christ hath come, and done all that Plato guessed at, and infinitely more, for our instruction and reformation, with irresistible proofs of his coming from God for this very purpose, should those who pretend to preach him and his religion, and live by that pretence, overlook him and his religion, as inattentively, as superciliously, as the other ancient philosophers did the seeming prediction of Plato, and preach up a sort of morality not founded on Christianity, what can we think of them? Of these men there can be very few so weak as to think of leading their hearers to Christianity by a morality so feeble as that which they hold forth by beginning at the wrong end of the work in hand. Ought they not to set out with the cause, in order to arrive at the effect? Can virtue be, to any purpose, inculcated, without first establishing the principles whereon it is to be built? As well may a stream run uphill towards its fountain. The rest, who moralize with no such view, in a manner vastly more futile than that of Cicero and Seneca, can be classed no where but in the lowest rank of infidels, as mere infidel deceivers. Are not the holy Scriptures the word of God?

Are we not therein taught by God himself the true religion, and consequently the only efficacious morality? How, then, dare any teacher, taking upon him the name of a Christian, presume to depart from the express dictates of infinite wisdom, and teach, for doctrines, the weak or wicked dictates of his own senseless and treacherous heart. The true Christian, depending for his salvation on the blood of God, suffers not a drop of it to fall beyond the verge of his own gratitude. And if he is a teacher of others, as there is no part of him unguarded by this blood for the bolt of justice to strike in, so his sermons are deeply dyed in this blood. The standard of his faith, erected for the soldiers of Christ to gather round, is of the same crimson colour, and proclaims the battle fought by the Captain of our salvation for the souls of all true believers. What a loud call to moral goodness is here made on gratitude and love! Can ethics speak with a voice like this? Wonder not, reader, that the faithful preacher of Christ comes forth, under this standard, like the angels above, a flame of fire kindled by gratitude, and tempered by charity. No bounds can be set to his gratitude, because called forth by infinite love; and Christian charity qualifies the sourness of even his reproofs and rebukes.

495. There is no question so often put to me as this, Whether are we to depend for salvation, on faith or works? When men, wholly ignorant, take upon them to instruct others in the principles of religion, it is no wonder that questions of this kind should be started, or that differences of opinion, in points like this, should find abettors. Whatsoever claims the teachers mentioned may lay to inspiration, it is undoubtedly the enemy of religion that hath stirred up this particular inquiry. If with fanatics, faith alone is made the organ of salvation, it follows, that morality and good works need not be much attended to; and if, with the Arians and Socinians, faith is treated with contempt, and morality alone depended on, that very morality, for want of faith, is deprived of its necessary principle and motive. The truth is, the question supposes a distinction, where there is no difference, but between a cause and its effect, so necessarily connected, that, to suppose them separated, even in thought, is to strike at the very foundation of our religion. In the Christian sense, faith and virtue cannot be separated without the total ruin of both. By true Christian faith we are saved; but that faith which is without works, is dead, is not Christian faith, and can save nobody. Our

blessed Saviour himself, being asked by the Jews, what they should do to work the works of God, is so far from distinguishing faith from works, even as cause and effect, that he makes them the same thing; for he answers, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent;' laying it down for a rule, that to believe in Christ is the very soul of Christian obedience; insomuch, that he who thus believes, must, as the Holy Spirit saith by St. Paul, 'be careful to maintain good works;' for otherwise he only believes as the devils do, who cannot help believing, nor acting nevertheless as infidels.

196. That contempt which one man hath for the understanding of another, is carried too far, and even for the understandings of brutes. For want of knowledge, what it is, we give it the name of instinct, a word, by which we mean nothing at all. I have entertained a great affection, and some degree of esteem, for the species of birds we call swallows, ever since I saw a remarkable instance of their sense and humour, played off upon a cat. This quadruped had in a very fine day, seated herself on the top of a gate-post, as if in contemplation, when ten or a dozen swallows, knowing her to be an enemy, took it into their heads to tantalize her, in a manner that demonstrated a high degree of, not only good sense, but humour. One of these birds, coming from behind her, flew close by her ear, and she made a snap at it with her paw, but was too late. Another swallow in five or six seconds did the same, and she made the like impotent attempt to catch it. This was followed by a third, and so on, to the number above mentioned; and each swallow, as it passed, seemed to set up a laugh at the disappointed enemy, very like the laugh of a young child when tickled. The whole number, succeeding one another, at the distance of about three yards, formed a regular circle in the air, and played it off, like a wheel, at her ear for near an hour, not seemingly at all alarmed at me, who stood within six or seven yards of the post. I enjoyed this sport as well as the pretty birds, till the cat, tired out with disappointments, quitted the gate-post, as much huffed, I believe, as I had been diverted. This lovely species of birds are naturally so domesticated with ours, that we ought to consider them as relations. They build with us, and flutter perpetually about us on account of the dung-hills, adjacent to our houses; not that they love putrefaction, but on account of the flies which are generated in that sort of stuff, as these are their only food, by which

means it happens that we are annually relieved from a great part of that nuisance, we are, after all, apt enough to complain of perhaps too apt; for how do we know whether these again are not doing for us the office of little swallows, in devouring some more minute and noxious kind of flies, the causes, it may be, of epidemic fevers and plagues; ordinarily thus checked; but when a guilty generation of men are to be chastised, suffered to increase, to abound, and enter into our blood. This supposition I found, not only on my own, but on the conjectures of others, more deeply read in natural history than myself. If our common flies are not thus employed, they, however, feed on those putrid or putrescent substances, blood, fat, &c. which would otherwise more considerably vitiate the air, which we continually breathe. It is rationally to be believed they answer many useful ends of their creation whereof we are ignorant. Be this, however, as it may, it is certain, that animal life in this world is every where supported by death. Man, in particular, eats not a meal, for which millions of insects do not die. The sea, the lakes, and all sorts of vegetables, swarm with such, every larger species of which is furnished with means of pursuing and seizing the smaller; and the smaller with means of eluding the pursuit of greater. In the mean time, the love of life and dread of death are strongly impressed on all, by their nature. This is a most awful mystery, which natural religion, as it is called, should look into, ere it presumes to cavil at the mysteries of revelation. These minute tribes, we perceive, were not created in vain; but as none of them were intended for immortality, and they must all die, it is but fit that every one of them should pay the tax of existence by contributing to that of others, that it may not die to no purpose, since all are to perish with the using. Man himself, proud man, must render back to the earth the body he hath borrowed, and submit to be the food of rats and worms.

197. Nations, and the generations of men in every nation, distinguish themselves, in point of virtue or vice, by their amusements, especially if grown common or habitual, more perhaps than by any other sort of characteristic. Our pleasures are less indifferent to us than our pains. They seize the springs of life and action by our imaginations, affections, and passions. They possess themselves of our hearts and wills in such a manner as to establish an absolute power over reason, principle, and conscience. They steal from us that liberty on which, of all things, we pre-

tend to set the highest value. In writing this I have my eye on the number of novels which for half a century have made the chief entertainment of that middle class which subsists between the court and the spade, and on the manner wherein that species of performance addresses itself to the attention of its readers; a manner which, in my humble opinion, does little honour either to the entertainers or the entertained, in regard to the taste or morals of both. In this censure I include all I have seen but Clarissa and Millennium-hall. The reason of this exception will presently appear. All the rest come forward on the footing of genius and invention, whereof they discover, I think, a miserable penury. They are all planned on the same set of characters and incidents, and end with precisely the same catastrophe. A fine young man and a fine young woman, not at all different from those of every other novel, fall violently in love with each other, the woman as violently as the man, and with as little saving to the modesty of her sex; meet with some troubles and distresses, usually from their parents; get the better of these, and marry; and, to make them perfectly happy, a rich uncle or two is killed, whereby they get possession of a great fortune, and consequently have afterward nothing else to do but to wallow in wealth, pride, luxury, and sensuality. Behold the heaven of a novel! So painted, gilded, and stretched out before the eyes of its reader, as totally to intercept the prospect of any other heaven. Throughout the whole the shortness of life is forgotten. Eternity is forgotten! God is forgotten! As to taste, what a dull and tiresome sameness! What a total want of originality and variety! What a stupid sterility of invention! As to religion and virtue, how is the heart and its affections centred in low and temporary things! How are these magnified and adorned in false colours to rivet the attention! The little life and vigour discovered in these performances is exhausted in fulsome descriptions of a passion, and of its gratification proposed, too gross to be modestly mentioned. The corruption of the human imagination and heart is but too apt to do all this dirty work for itself, without the help of a novel, which, as it is generally managed, is but the cantharides of reading, a little palliated for the taste of the polite by the specious name of love, and some decency of terms, which render it more insinuating and dangerous than the gross expressions of the kennel could do. Our nature exhibits no sight so despicable, and yet so hideous, as an old hag or battered rake

reading a novel through spectacles, every two minutes, to be cleared of the rheum distilling from their eyes, while the filthy drivel is wiped away from their chaps. How ghastly! These wretches are haunted by the Asmodeus or ghost of their former lewdness, till they give the painter a subject more qualified to represent the most frightful fiend in hell, than the imagination of a Raphael or an Angelo could ever have formed. It is unhappy for some people that they can read. Besides, here is a fictitious picture of life, so widely different from the original, that the young girl is made to expect a hero, and the young bachelor, a goddess, in marriage; insomuch, that such young men and women as the world affords, when they go together, are sure to be miserably disappointed, and taught to despise and abhor each other. What a difference between the lover and the husband! What a dowdy is the wife to the mistress! All the novels I have seen, except the two above mentioned, are planned upon an atheistical footing; and so ill planned even on this, that were there no life but the present, its few and casual satisfactions would be greatly impaired, if not in a great measure prevented, to such readers of our novels as have, in any degree, realized their stories to themselves. In these the world is represented in disguise; so that the reader is led from one scene of delusion to another. Were the heaven of a novel to be eternal, the condition would not be eligible. Such an infinity of disappointments, of ingratitude, of villany, of treachery, of cruelty, the happy pair must suffer under, as would often force them to wish for death. Nay, they themselves, finely as they are set off by their writers, would often contribute so much to their mutual misery, as to long for a total separation. Our holy religion represents this life, at the best, as a state of vanity and vexation of spirit; and every where prescribes self-denial and mortification for the reduction of our appetites and passions, especially our pride and love of sensual pleasure. But it is the grand aim and end of our novels to pamper and inflame both to the uttermost, though, of all our irregular dispositions, these want it the least. So saith religion, and so saith reason and universal experience. The pride and vanity, the impurity and wantonness of our corrupt nature, require not surely to be fed; but fed as they are by wealth, high station, and luxury, a novel comes in to finish the infernal work, and raises them to distraction. This turns away the ears of its readers from the truth to fables, transports them into a land

of lies, and brings them directly into the net of the great deceiver. Yet as novels catch the attention by promising amusement, they might be so managed, as greatly to promote the cause of religion and virtue. Infidel and dissolute as the times are, a work of this sort may be made exceedingly agreeable. An inverted novel would be a new thing, and therefore read. Let us suppose a man of true genius, such as the author of Chrysal, to give us a Mr. M. of good understanding, and a sentimental heart, married to a Mrs. M. of like mind and temper; neither of them a beauty, but very agreeable in person and countenance; not in love with each other, but warmed with conjugal and mutual affection. Let us suppose them both tinctured with a sense of religion; but whereas Mr. M. sets out with a pretty ample fortune in money, and a very honourable and somewhat lucrative post at court, this sense of religion is overborne by pride, parade, luxury, and a taste for high life, in them both. Together with the extravagance of a magnificent table and equipage, they give into the fashion of playing high. Mr. M. engaged with stock-jobbers and in the South-Sea, soon dissipates his fortune, and by a sudden change in the ministry loses his post, is reduced to the utmost distress, thinks of laying violent hands on himself, and Mrs. M. is going fast into a state of distraction, when Mr. O. a country parson, of very good understanding, and of great piety, by his advice calmly administered, saves the one from madness, and the other from suicide; persuades them to retire to a neat little lodge and a small purchase, made by Mr. M. in a remote part of England, near the Land's End, worth about one hundred pounds a year, which, together with about one hundred pounds in money, was all, in the wreck of Mr. M.'s fortune, that could be saved by the brother of Mrs. M., an honest friendly attorney. When Mr. M. was in power he had obtained a little parish for the parson, and introduced the attorney into good business; and these two men, facetious and good humoured, had served Mr. and Mrs. M. on a thousand occasions, as butts, in the time of their grandeur. All the four had some humour, and valued themselves on somewhat more than they had. When Mr. M. introduced the attorney to the parson, he said, Parson, know the attorney P. for as honest a man, if not more so, than any of your order. O. Are you sure of that? M. There never lived an honester man than J. P. O. Mr. P. take this shilling. P. Well, I have taken it, but pray, why, sir? O. I once gave a sixpence for the sight of a camel; and that of an honest attorney

is as rare as the sight of an elephant, and is worth a shilling. Pray, Mr. M., will you give me as much credit for the character of St. Paul, as I have given you for that of Mr. P.? M. Perhaps may, as soon as I have reason to know you, and you to know St. Paul, as well as I do honest P. O. Well, keep your shilling till you do, at which time, I fear, a shilling will be as much a medal with you, as it is now with me. P. Lord forbid. O. I would say, amen, if I durst pray for such a miracle. The little estate mentioned, most agreeably situated, as to prospects and adjacencies, makes a part of Mr. O.'s small parish. This worthy clergyman, with a handsome collection of books, both religious and entertaining, owes his living to the interest of Mr. M. in the days of his worldly prosperity. Thither Mr. and Mrs. M., glad to get out of the place of their fall, hurry as fast as they can, with their son and daughter, both very young, and with their friend Mr. O. In this asylum, their vanity and passion for luxury soon subside, and their religious principles, aided by the conversation of Mr. O. take an early lead in their minds; and they begin to aspire to an infinitely higher grandeur, than that from whence they had been precipitated. They now no longer say they have fallen, but maintain, they have risen in the true sense of the word. In this state of tranquillity, the culture of their own minds, and that of their children, well supplies the place of that attendance they wasted on people, alive only to their appetites and bellies, on interested expectants, on designing flatterers, on gamblers, and false friends. The improvement of their garden, and of the adjacent lands, hitherto long neglected, carries them out to healthful air and exercise, in a scene every day growing more and more beautiful by their attention to it and Millar's Dictionary. These produce a species of happiness never tasted at the courts of this world, and known only to the candidates for that of heaven. Here reason and religion have leave to speak; and here God is seen in his works, and heard in his word. Here the parents learn humility, simplicity, and industry; and instil them into their children, with no other ambition, than that of aiming at true 'glory, honour, and immortality.' The parishioners, old and young, of Mr. O. consider and love him as their father. He and Mrs. O. are their only physicians. When they come to the glebe-house, whether with, or without a little basket of fresh eggs, or a sucking pig, they are sure of a glass of good cider or made-wine, with a cordial inquiry about their families and their affairs. On the Lord's-day

there is no one absent from his house, who is able to go thither; nor does any one so much as think of absenting himself from his table, if above the age of fifteen. Mr. and Mrs. M. with the parson and his wife, all musical, sing the psalms as loud as they can roar; so do all the parishioners, previously well instructed by their good minister, and his wife. Among these there is a poor Irish labouring man, who always throws himself on his belly, upon the flags, just within the church door, and in that posture continues during the whole service and sermon. Finding him tenacious of this posture, Mr. O. caused him to lay a matt under his breast; Mr. and Mrs. M. having early inquired the meaning of this, had an answer from Mr. O. Poor Ben Blatal, the son of a rich farmer in the north of Ireland, at the age of twenty-five, found himself possessed, in right of himself and his wife, of about a thousand pounds. Tempted by this fund, he gave himself entirely up to drinking strong beer and spirits. This practice swelled him to a most enormous size; dyed his face, at first in scarlet, and then in purple; nor was it long before the gout confined him during the greater part of every year, in the most excruciating pains. His vice soon became his only medicine, and he drank to keep the gout from his stomach. But at the age of thirty, he had not left himself worth a single shilling. At this period of his life, poverty cured him at once of his vice, his distemper, and of his bloated belly, and restored to him the use of his limbs. It did more. It forced him to take a spade into his hands, and hire himself out as a day-labourer. He declares, he never knew what happiness was till then. He fled hither from the people who knew him; and I, as soon as I knew him, offered him the key of my church, which he refused, because, as he said, having lived five years in the tent of sin, he was not worthy to become a door-keeper in the house of God. My parishioners and I then gave the key to his grandson, a fine boy, whom you may have seen sitting beside him in church, and often weeping over him. How apropos to you and me! said Mrs. M. to her husband. So apropos, said Mr. M. that if you dwell a little longer on the affecting subject, I do not know, but I may prostrate myself beside him in the church. I should not object to your so doing, said Mr. O. if God and my people had not a more important service for you in his house. Your business there, beside the services peculiar to yourself, is to stand fast in the faith, and by your example to lead my poor flock in the way they should go. Mr. M. I will take

him into my garden, and into my heart. Mr. O. Do so. He is now five-and-forty; but he does as much work as two English labourers. He digs with either foot, and with either hand foremost on the spade-shaft, which, he says, is to him almost as refreshing as rest. This is a practice not known to other labourers. Mr. M. A most marvellous man! I will make something of his grandson. Mr. O. Ben will not suffer him to be raised in the world, nor made rich. It is a maxim with him, that no man can be safely trusted with riches. The boy can read, write, cipher, and sing psalms, to the full as well as any one of his age in Great Britain. A novel of this kind, and conducted after some such manner as this, by a genius fertile in incidents and in matter for suitable conversations on particular occasions (which I submit merely as a hint, rather than even a sketch), might, I think, be extremely entertaining, and highly instructive. I know the story of Ben Blatal to be literally true, while the scene of it lies in Ireland; but the name I give him is fictitious.

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